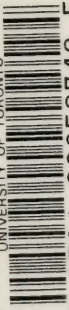
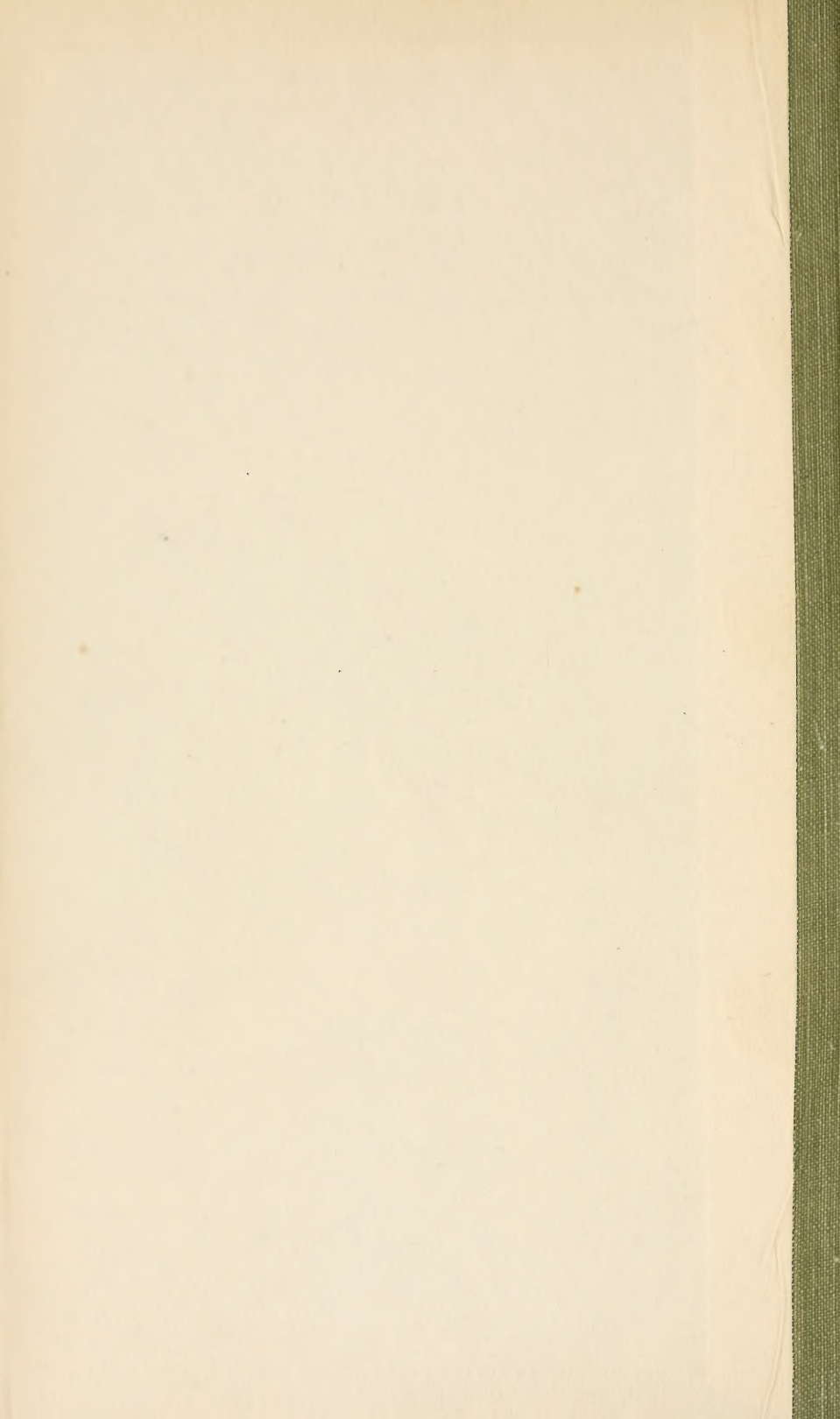


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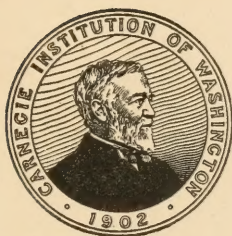
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I

# LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

EDITED BY  
HENRY BERGEN

PART III.  
(Books VI.-IX.)



1897/11  
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THE CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON, 1923

A,

THE HISTORY OF THE  
FALL OF BRITAIN



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LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

PART III.

BOOKS VI.-IX.

THE DAUNCE OF MACHABREE



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#### ERRATA

P. 733, line 2172: *read* thassaut.

P. 889, line 2363: *for* epsecial *read* especial.



THE FALL OF PRINCES



## BOOK VI

[Here Bochas sitting in his studie alone writeth a grete processe, how Fortune like a monstrous ymage hauyng an hundred handys appered vn to him and spak / and Bochas vn to hir making betwixt hem bothe many grete argumentys & resouns of Fortunys chaunces.]<sup>1</sup>

**I**N his studie alone as Bochas stood, [p. 298] As Bochas stood alone in his study, pen in hand, musing on the vicissitudes of Fortune,  
 His penne on honde, of sodeyn auenture  
 To remembre he thouhte it ded hym good,  
 How þat no man may hymself assure  
 In worldli thynges fulli to recure  
 Grace of Fortune, to make hir to be stable,  
 Hir dayli chaungis been so variable.  
 She braideth euer on the chaunteplure:  
 Now song, now wepyng, now wo, now gladnesse,  
 Now in merthe, now peynis to endure,  
 Now liht, now heuy, now bittir, now suetnesse,  
 Now in trouble, now free, now in distresse,  
 Shewyng to vs a maner resemblaunce,  
 How\* worldli welthe hath heer non assuraunce.  
 Whil Bochas pensiff stood sool in his librarie  
 With cheer oppressid, pale in his visage,  
 Sumdeel abashed, alone & solitarie,  
 To hym appered a monstrous ymage,  
 Partid on tweyne of colour & corage,  
 Hir riht[e] side ful of somer flours,  
 The tothir oppressid with wyntris stormy shours.  
 Bochas astonid, feerful for to abraide  
 Whan he beheeld the wonderful figure  
 Of Fortune, thus to hymself he saide:  
 "What may this meene? is this a creature  
 Or a monstre transffoormyd ageyns nature,  
 Whos brennyng eyen sparklyng of ther liht  
 As doon sterris the frosti wyntres niht?"

8  
4

8  
12

16  
20

24  
28

2. on] in H. 6. 1st to] om. H.  
 9. song now wepyng] syng now wepe H. 12. 1st in] om. H.  
 14. How] No B, J, H, R 3, H 5, P. 17. abaiished R.  
 22. abraide] brayde R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 121 recto.

- Her face was  
cruel and terri-  
ble, her hair  
untressed, her  
figure lustsome,  
and she had  
100 hands.
- And of hir cheer[e] ful good heed he took,  
Hir face seemyng cruel & terrible,  
And bi disdeyn[e] manacyng of look,  
Hir her vntressid, hard, sharp & horrible, 32  
Froward of shappe, lothsum & odible.  
An hundred handis she hadde on ech part  
In sondri wise hir giftes to depart.
- which [100] men  
up to his  
estate and cast  
them down into  
adversity
- Summe off hir handis lefft up men alofte 36  
To hih estat of worldli dignite,  
Anothir hand griped ful vnsofte,  
Which cast another in gret aduersite:  
Gaff oon richesse, anothir pouerte, 40  
Gaff summe also bi report a good name,  
Noised anothir of sclaudre &\* diffame.
- Her garment  
was of many  
colours, the  
pale blue of  
feigned con-  
stancy, gold  
mingled with  
the green of  
change,  
black for  
mourning,  
russet brown  
for labour;
- Hir habit was of manyfold colours:  
Wachet bleuh of feyned stedfastnesse, 44  
Hir gold allaied like sonne in wattri shours,  
Meynt with liht greene for chaung & doubilnesse.  
A pretens red: dreed meynt with hardynesse;  
Whiht for clennesse, lik soone for to faille; 48  
Feynt blak for moornyng, russet for trauaille.
- all in harmony  
with her change-  
able nature.
- Hir colours meynt of wollis mo than oon;  
Sumwhile eclipsed, sumwhile she shon briht.  
Dulle as an asse whan men hadde haste to gon, 52  
And as a swalwe gerissh of hir fliht,  
Tween slouh & swifft; now crokid & now vpriht,  
Now as a crepil lowe coorbid down,  
Now a duery and now a champioun. 56
- Sometimes she  
is a coward,  
sometimes as  
bold as a lion;  
sometimes  
Croesus, some-  
times Agamen-  
non; to-day a  
man, to-morrow  
a woman.
- Now a coward, durst nat come in pres,  
And\* sumwhile hardi as leoun;  
Now lik Ector, now dreedful Thersites,  
Now was she Cresus, now Agamenoun, 60  
Sardanapallus off condicioun;  
Now was she mannyssh, now was she femynyne,  
Now coude she reyne, now koude she falsli shyne.

34. hundrith H. 42. &amp;] &amp; off B, R.

44. stedfastnesse] stablenesse H, stabilnesse R 3.

45. sonne] golde H. 48. Whiht] which R.

49. 2nd for] off R. 50. meynt] ment H. 53. Swalouh H.

56. and] an R.

58. And] Now B, R, J — as] as a P.

60. 2nd now] now was she H.



Now a mermaide angelik off face,  
 A tail behynde verray serpentyne,  
 Now debonaire, now froward to do grace,  
 Now as a lamb tretable & benigne,  
 Now lik a wolff of nature to maligne,  
 Now Sirenes to synge folk a-slepe  
 Til Karibdis drowne hem in the deepe.

64 Now a mermaid with angelic face and the tail of a serpent; now a lamb and again a wolf.

68

Thus Iohn Bochas considering hir figure,  
 Al hir fetures in ordre he gan beholde,  
 Hir breede, hir heihte, hir shap & hir stature,  
 An hundrid handis & armys ther he tolde:  
 Wheroff astonid, his herte gan to colde;  
 And among alle hir membrs euerichon,  
 He sempte she hadde no feet upon to gon.

72 John Bochas looked at her well, and after observing her features one after another, his heart grew cold.

76 It seemed to him that she had no feet to walk upon;

And whil that he considered al this thyng,  
 Atween[e] tweyne, as it wer in a traunce,  
 She sodenli toward hym lookyng,  
 He conceyued be hir contenance, —  
 Wer it for ire, wer it for plesaunce,  
 Outher for fauour, outhur for disdeyn, —  
 Bi the maner she wolde sumwhat seyn.

80 and while he stood as in a trance, she turned to him and said,

84

Lookyng a-scoign as she had had disdeyn, [p. 299]  
 "Bochas," quod she, "I knowe al thyn entent,  
 How thou trauailest, besiest the in veyn,  
 In thi studie euer dilligent,  
 Now in the west, now in the orient  
 To serche stories, north & meredien,  
 Of worthi princis that heer-toforn ha been.

84 "Bochas, I know what you are about, searching out stories of worthy princes,

88

Summe duellid vndir the pool Artyk,  
 Be my fauour vpreised to the sterris;  
 Othir vndir the pool Antartik,  
 Which in contrarye from vs so ferr is.  
 Summe encresid & set up bi the werris,  
 Lik as me list ther tryumphes to auauance;\*  
 Frownyng on othir, I brouht hem to myschaunce.

92 upon whom I have smiled or frowned.

96

I see the besi remembryng be scriptures  
 Stories of pryncis in eueri maner age,  
 As my fauour folwed ther auentures,

100 "I have seen you describing their deeds in plain unadorned language,

73. heihte] length R.

77. He] Hym H.

97. to auauance] tauauance B.

- Be humble stile set in pleyn langage, —  
 Nat maad corious be non auantage  
 Of rethoriques, with musis for to stryue, 104  
 But in pleyn foorme ther deedis to descryue.
- diligently giving  
 them praise or  
 blame, as they  
 deserve.  
 "Some were  
 extolled to  
 Jupiter with a  
 trumpet of gold.
- In which processe thou dost gret dilligence,  
 As thei disserue to yiue hem thank or blame:  
 Settest up oon in roiall excellence 108  
 Withynne myn hous callid the Hous of Fame, —  
 The goldene trumpet *with* blastis off good name  
 Enhaunceth oon to ful hih[e] parties,  
 Wher Iubiter sit among the heuenli skies. 112
- while others,  
 with the blast  
 of a sable  
 trumpet, were  
 plunged down  
 from their  
 royal estate.
- Another trumpet, of sownis ful vengable,  
 Which bloweth up at feestis funerall,  
 Nothyng briht[e], but of colour sable,  
 Fer fro my fauour, dedli & mortall, 116  
 To plunge pryncis from ther estat roiall,  
 Whan I am wroth, to make hem loute lowe,  
 Than of malis I do that trumpet blowe.
- "You have  
 concealed noth-  
 ing, spared  
 neither their  
 crowns nor  
 their purple  
 robes, but given  
 them their  
 deserts.
- Thou hast writyn & set togidre in gros, 120  
 Lik ther desert worldli mennys deedis,  
 Nothyng concealed nor vndr[e] couert cloos,  
 Spared [not] ther crownys nor ther purpil weedis, 123  
 Ther goldene sceptris; but youe to them ther meedis:  
 Crownid oon with laureer hih on his hed vpset,  
 Other with peruyнке maad for the gibet.
- "Thus I dis-  
 tribute my  
 gifts, sometimes  
 to one, some-  
 times to an-  
 other, as in a  
 game of chance.
- Thus dyuersli my giffes I\* departe,  
 Oon acceptid, a-nothir is refusid; 128  
 Lik hasardours my dees I [do] iuparte,  
 Oon weel foorthrid, anothir is accusid.  
 My play is double, my trust is euer abusid,  
 Thouh oon to-day hath my fauour wonne, 132  
 To-morwe ageyn I can eclipse his sonne.
- "And now I  
 have come to  
 shew you what  
 my disposition  
 is like: to-day  
 I may flatter,  
 and frown to-  
 morrow.
- Cause of my comyng, pleynli to declare  
 Bi good auis, vnto thi presence,  
 Is to shewe my maneres & nat spare, 136  
 And my condiciouns, breefli in sentence,  
 Preued of old & newe experience,  
 Pleynli to shewe, me list nat for to rowne,  
 To-day I flatre, to-morwe I can weel frowne. 140
106. gret] hi H.  
 113. sownis] sown H. 120. &] an R. 123. not] om. R.  
 127. I] I gan B. 131. euer] ay H.  
 132. my fauoure hath I-wonne J. 138. newe] nex H.

- This hour I can shewe me merciable,  
 And sodenli I can be despitous:  
 Now weelwillid, hastili vengable,  
 Now sobre of cheer, now wood &\* furious. 144  
 My play vnkouth, my maners merueilous  
 Braid on the wynd; now glad & now I mourne;  
 Lik a wedircok\* my face ech day I tourne.
- Wheryn Bochas, I telle the yit ageyn, 148  
 Thou dost folie thi wittis for to plie;  
 All\* thi labour thou spillest in veyn,  
 Geyn my maneres so felli to replie, —  
 Bi thi writyng to fynde a remedie, 152  
 To interupte in thi laste dawes  
 My statutis [and] my custumable lawes.
- Al the labour off philisophres olde,  
 Trauaile off poetis my maner to depraue, 156  
 Hath\* been of yore to seyn lik as thei wolde  
 Ouer my fredam the souereynte to haue.  
 But of my lawes the libertes to saue,  
 Vpon my wheel thei shal hem nat diffende, 160  
 But whan me list[e] that thei shal dessende.
- Whi sholde men putte me in blame,  
 To folwe the nature of my double play?  
 With newe buddis doth nat ver the same, 164  
 Whan premeroles appeere fressh & gay? —  
 To-day thei shewe, to-morwe thei gon away;  
 Somer afftir of flouris hath foisoun,  
 Til Iun with zithes aftir mowe hem doun. 168
- Now is the se calm and blandisshyng; [p. 300]  
 Now ar the wyndis comfortable & still;  
 Now is Boreas sturdi in blowyng,  
 Which yong[e] sheep & blosmys greueth ille. 172  
 Whi also shold I nat haue my wille,  
 To shewe my-silf now smothe and aftir trouble,  
 Sith to my kynde it longeth to be double?

"I am as fickle  
 as the wind or  
 a weathercock,  
 and my ways  
 are marvelous.

"It is foolish of  
 you, Bochas, to  
 try to change  
 my habits and  
 nature.

"All the labour  
 of old philoso-  
 phers was of  
 no avail against  
 me; when I  
 desire it they  
 must descend.

"Why should  
 men blame  
 me? Is it not  
 the same with  
 the changing  
 seasons

and the sea,  
 now calm, now  
 stormy? Why  
 should I not  
 have my will?

144. &] now B.

147. wedircok] woodcok B (wedircok R, wedirkok H, wethircok J, wedircoke R 3, wedyrcok H 5, wedrecok P).

150. All] And B.

155. labours H, R 3, laboures P.

157. Hath] Haue B.

165. primerolis R, primrollis H, premerollis R 3, Prymerolis J.

170. comfortable H.

- "No man is so miserable but he hopes that some day I may relieve him." No man so ferre is falle in wrechidnesse 176  
 But that he stant in trust to rise ageyn;  
 Nor non so deepe plungid in distresse,  
 Nor with dispeir nor wanhope ouerleyn,  
 But that ther is sum hope lefft certeyn 180  
 To yiue hym counforte, seruyng his entente,  
 To be releued whan me list assente.
- "The flowers and green of spring disappear in August," The erthe is clad in motles whiht & rede;  
 Whan Estas entrith with violettis soote, 184  
 The greuis greene, & in euery meede  
 The bawme fleteth, which doth to hertis boote.  
 August passid, ageyn into\* the roote  
 Be cours of nature the vertu doth resorte 188  
 Be reuolucioun to Kynde, I me reporte.
- and only fools blame me for my inconstancy. Who sholde thanne debarre me to be double,  
 Sith doubilnesse longeth to me of riht?  
 Now fressh with somer, now with wyntir trouble, 192  
 Now blynd of look, dirk as the cloudi niht;  
 Now glad of cheer, of herte murie & liht;  
 Thei ar but foolis ageyn my myht that muse  
 Or me atwite; thouh I my poweer vse. 196
- "Men must take me as they find me; and they have no right to complain of my doubleness," Seelde or neuer I bide nat in o poynt:  
 Men must at lepis take me as thei fynde;  
 And whan I stonde ferthest out of ioynt  
 To sette folk[es] bakward ferre behynde, 200  
 Than worldli men with ther eyen blynde  
 Sore compleyne upon my doubilnesse,  
 Calle me thanne the froward fals goddesse.
- because it is my nature to be double.  
 "It is no slander to me, for I am the lady and princess of change." Thus bi your writyng & merueilous langage 204  
 I am disclaundrid of mutabilite,  
 Wheroff be riht I cach gret\* auantage,  
 Sith dubilnesse no sclaunder is to me,  
 Which is a parcel of my liberte, 208  
 To be callid, be tittle off rihtwisnesse,  
 Off chaungis newe ladi & pryncesse."
- John Bochas heard with a frightened face all that Fortune said, and then replied meekly: Thus whan Fortune hadde said hir will,  
 Parcel declared of hir gouernaunce, 212  
 Made a stynt & sobirli stood still.  
 John Bochas sat & herd al hir daliaunce,

181. comfote H. 187. into] vnto B.

194. of herte] sadde H.

198. lepis] lopis R, loopis H, J, lopis R 3, lepys H 5, loupes P.

203. the] a H. 206. gret] a gret B, H, R, J, P, R 3, H 5.

Fearful of cheer[e], pale of contenance,  
In ordre enprentid ech thyng that she saide, 216  
Ful demurli thus he dede abraide.

He took onto hym vertu & corage  
Vpon a poynt for to abide\* stable:  
"Certis," quod he, "lik to thi visage,  
Al worldli thyngis be double & chaungable; 220  
Yit for my part bi remembraunce notable\*  
I shal parfourme, sothli yif I conne,  
This litil book that I ha[ue] begonne. 224

"Certainly all worldly things are changeable, nevertheless I am going to finish my little book if I can.

And lest my labour deie nat nor [a]palle,  
Of this book the title for to saue,  
Among myn othir litil werkis alle,  
Witb lettres large aboue vpon my graue 228  
This bookis name shal in ston be graue,  
How I, Iohn Bochas, in especiall  
Of worldli princis writyn haue the fall.

"And lest the memory of my labour die, there shall be engraved in large letters above my tomb, how I, Iohn Bochas, have written the Fall of Princes.

Off which emprise the cause to descryue, — 232  
This was first ground, I wil it nat denye,  
Teschewe slouthe & vices al my lyue,  
And specialli the vice of gloteny,  
Which is norice vnto lecherie: 236  
This was cheeff cause whi I vndirtook  
The compilacioun off this litil book.

"I undertook to write it, that I might avoid idleness and vice, and especially gluttony, the nurse of lust.

Yit bi thi talkyng, as I vndirstonde,  
Ech thyng heer of nature is chaungable, 240  
Afftir thi sentence, bothe on se & londe;  
Yit koude I rekne thynges that be stable:  
As vertuous [lyf] abidyng vnmutable,  
Set hool to Godward of herte, will & thouht, 244  
Maugre thi power, & ne chaungith nouht.

"You say that everything here is changeable of nature: yet certain things, such as virtuous life, are stable in spite of your power.

Thou maist eek callyn [vn]to remembraunce  
Thynges maad stable bi grace which is dyuyne, — 248  
Hastow nat herd[e] the perseueraunce  
Of hooli martirs, which list nat to declyne  
Fro Cristis feith til thei dide fyne?  
Thi wheel in hem hadde non interesse,  
To make hem varie fro ther stabilnesse. 252

"Have you not heard of the holy martyrs? "The turning of your wheel had no power over them.

219. to abide] tabide B, H, R. 222. ful notable B.

228. large] long H. 239. thi] the R. 250. thei] he R, J.

- "A man armed  
with virtue,  
who trusts in  
Christ Jesus, is  
proof against  
your variaunce!"
- A man that is enarmed in vertu  
Ageyn thi myht to make resistance,  
And set his trust be grace in Crist Iesu,  
And hath al hool his hertli aduertence  
On rihtwisnesse, force & on prudence,  
With ther suster callid attemperaunce,  
Hath a sauconduit ageyn thi variaunce! 256
- "Such men pay  
no attention to  
your wheel,  
their trust  
stands on faith,  
hope and  
charity, which  
are called  
theologic virtues."
- The[i] sette no stoor be thi double wheele,\*  
With supportacioun of other ladies thre;  
Ther trust stant nat in mail[e], plate or stel,  
But in thes vertues: feith, hope & charite,  
Callid vertues theologic,  
Which with foure afforn heer specefied,  
Thi wheel & the han vttili defied. 260
- "If I had  
wings to fly to  
heaven, I should  
see that you  
had nothing to  
do with the  
seven planets:  
it is only  
worldly fools  
who call you  
a goddess."
- Yiff I with wyngis myhte fleen to heuene,  
Ther sholde I see thou hast nothyng to doone  
With Iubiter nor the planetis seuene,  
With Phebus, Mars, Mercurie nor the moone.  
But woorldli foolis, erly, late and soone,  
Such as be blent & dirkid with leudnesse,  
Bi fals oppynyoun calle the a goddesse. 264
- "The virtues  
are far removed  
from your  
domain."
- Giftes of grace nor gifftes of nature,  
Almessede[de] doon with humylite,  
Loue and compassioun, been ferr out of thi cure, —  
Semlynesse, strengthe, bounte nor beute  
Vertuousli vsid in ther degre, —  
Geyn non of these thi poweer may nat strechche;  
For who is vertuous lite of the doth rechche. 276
- "And fools  
blame you in  
their adversity  
only to excuse  
themselves."
- Off\* thi condiciouns to sette a-nother preeff,  
Which foolis vsen in ther aduersite  
For excusacioun, as sumtyme seith a theeff,  
Whan he is hangid: 'it was his destyne' —  
Atwitith Fortune his iniquite,  
As thouth she hadde domynacioun  
To reule man bi will ageyn resoun. 280
- "But I, who  
am unable to  
solve the prob-  
lems of exist-  
ence, leave  
them to those  
who are  
scholars by  
profession."
- For which I, Bochas, in parti desolat  
To determyne such heuenli hid secrees,  
To them that been dyuynes of estat  
I remitte such vnkouth pryuites;  
And with poetis that been off low degrees 288

253-3268 are omitted in R. 260. wheele] variaunce B.  
262. or] nor H. 277. nor] or H.  
281. Off] Aff B — condicioun H.

I eschewe to clymbe to hih aloffte,  
List for presumpcioun I shold nat fall[e] softe.

But yif I had hid in my corage  
Such mysteries of dyuyn prouidence,  
Withoute envie I wolde in pleyn langage  
Vttre hem be writyng with humble reuerence, —  
Predestynacioun nouthre prescience  
Nat apperteene, Fortune, vnto the;  
And for my part I wil excuse me,

296 "At any rate,  
I am sure  
that neither  
predestination  
nor prescience  
appertain to  
you, Fortune.

And proceede lik as I vndirtook,  
Aftir that I haue told my mateer,  
Of Fall of Princis for to write a book.  
But yit afforn[e], yif thou woldest heere,  
I desire of hool hert & enter  
To haue a copee of princis namys all,  
Which fro thi wheel[e] thou hast maad to fall.

304 "And so I  
will go on  
with my book;  
yet I should be  
very grateful  
for a list of  
the names of  
all the princes  
who have fallen  
from your  
wheel.

Thi secre bosum is ful of stories  
Of sondry princis, how thei ther liff haue lad,  
Of ther triumphes & ther victories,  
Which olde poetis & philisophres sad  
In meetre & prose compiled han & rad,  
Sunge ther laudis, ther fatis eek reserued  
Bi remembrance, as thei haue disserued.

312 "Your secret  
bosom is full of  
the stories of  
princes whose  
praises have  
been sung by  
the old poets.

Of which I haue put summe in memorie,  
Theron sette my studie & my labour,  
So as I coude, to ther ences of glorie,  
Thouh of langage I hadde but smal fauour,  
Cause Caliope dede me no socour.  
For which thou hast duryng al this while  
Rebuked me of my rud[e] stile.

316 "Some of them  
I have myself  
put in remem-  
brance, although  
I am a poor  
hand at writing,  
and Calliope  
has given me  
320 no help.

Men wolde acounte it wer a gret dulnesse,  
But yiff langage conueied be bi prudence,  
Out declared bi sobre auysynesse,  
Vndir support fauoured be diffence  
Of Tullius, cheef prince of elloquence, —  
Sholde mor proffite, shortli to conclude,  
Than my stile, spoke in termys rude.

324 "Language  
favoured by  
the eloquence  
of Tully is very  
superior to my  
rude style.

294. for] of H.  
308. fro] frome H.

328

yet it often happens that good grain is found growing under husks, and good counsel spoken in blunt terms sometimes succeeds where rhetoric fails.

Yit ofte tyme it hath be felt & seyn,  
Vnder huskes growyng on lond\* arable,  
Hath be founde & tried out good greyn; 332  
Vndir rude leuys, shakyng & vnstable,  
Pullid fair frut, holsum & delectable.  
And semblably, wher rethorik hath failed,  
In blunt termys good counseil hath auailed. 336

"It was through music and philosophy that the commons first became civilized:

Philosophres of the goldene ages [p. 302]  
And poetes that fond out fressh ditees,  
As kyng Amphiouyn with his fair langages  
And with his harpyng made folk of louh degrees, 340  
As laborers, tenhabite first cites; —  
And so bi musik and philosophie  
Gan first of comouns noble policie.

for music is harmony, and philosophy sprang from prudence, and upon concord and wise policy were built the walls of Thebes.

The cheeff of musik is mellodie & accord; 344  
Welle of philosophie sprang out of prudence,  
Bi which too menys gan vnite & concord  
With politik vertu to haue ther assistence:  
Wise men to regne, subiectis do reuerence. 348  
And bi this ground, in stories men may see,  
Wer bilt the wallis of Thebes the cite.

"Discord goes hand in hand with diversity, peace with prudent policy, and quarrels were first brought in by you, Lady of Contest and Strife —

Accord in musik causith the mellodie;  
Wher is discord, ther is dyuersite, 352  
And wher is pes is prudent policie  
In ech kyngdam and euery gret contre.  
Striff first inducid bi thi duplicite;  
For which thou maist, as clerkis the descryues, 356  
Be callid ladi of kontekis & of stryues.

slaughter, debate, froward dissensions and the desolation of towns and countries.

First wer founde out hatful dyuysiouns  
Be thi contreued fals mutabilites, —  
Slauhtre, debat, froward discenciouns 360  
In regiouns, prouynces and cites,  
Desolacioun off townis & contrees,  
Wheroff men hadde first experience  
Bi thi chaungable geri violence. 364

"It is you who first got men into trouble with your uncouth snares, and made them hate one another;

Thus bi thoppynyoun of thi wheel most double,  
As ferr be nature as it was possible,  
Ouerthwertli thou brouhtest men in trouble,  
Madest ech to other froward & odible 368  
Bi thi treynys vnkouth & terrible,

331. land] ground B. 334. delitable H.

339. kyng]om. H. 346. concord]accorde H. 349. story H.



Lik a corsour makth coltis that be wilde  
With spore & whippe to be tame & mylde,

Thus bi the tempest off thyn aduersites,  
To make men mor tame of ther corage.  
In [ther] discordes tween kyngdames & cites,  
Afftir the sharpe[nesse] of thi cruel rage\*  
Onli bi mene of speche & fair langage,  
Folk be thi fraude fro grace ferr exilid,  
Wer be fair speche to vnite reconcilid.

372 and then you  
would tame  
them with ad-  
uersity, and  
afterwards it  
was fair speech  
that reconciled  
them to unity.

Peepelis of Grece, of Roome & off Cartage,  
Next in Itaille, with many a regeoun,  
Wer inducid bi swetnesse\* of langage  
To haue togidre ther conuersacioun,  
To beelde castellis & many roial toun.  
What caused this? — to telle in breeff the foorme, 384  
But eloquence rud peepelis to reffoorme.

380 "Sweetness of  
language in-  
duced them to  
consort together  
and build castles  
and cities.

Affor tyme thei wer but bestiall,  
Till thei to resoun be lawes wer constreynd,  
Vndir discrecioun bi statutis naturall  
Fro wilful lustis be prudence wer restreynd.  
Bassent maad oon, & togidre [en]cheynyd  
In goldene cheynys of pes and vnite;  
Thus gan the beeldyng of eueri gret cite.

388 "At first they  
were ignorant,  
until laws con-  
strained them  
to reason, and  
prudence  
checked their  
wilfulness.

But whan thou medlist to haue an interesse,  
Thei that wer oon to brynge hem at discord,  
To interupte with thi doubilnesse  
Cites, regiouns, that wer of oon accord, —  
Lik as this book can ber [me] weel record,  
Fro the tyme that thou first began  
Thi mutabilite hath stroied many a man.

396 "But you inter-  
fere to bring  
them into  
discord, and  
many a man  
has been des-  
troyed by  
your mutability.

Thou causest men to been obstynat  
In ther corages & incorrigible,  
Wilful, froward, causeles at debat,  
Ech to other contrarious & odible,  
Them to refourme almost impossible, —  
Til fair[e] speche, voidyng dyuisioun,  
Pes reconcilid tween many a regeoun.\*

400 "You make  
men obstinate  
and wilful,  
froward and  
hateful to one  
another; but  
fair speech has  
reconciled many  
404 a region.

375. sharp[nesse] sharp J, R 3, H 5, R 2, H 3, H 4 — rage] outrage B, H, H 5, rages J, P.

381. bi] with H — swetnesse] Record B, swiffnesse H — of] of fair J.

383. roial toun] regioun H. 387. to] bi H — be] to H.

401. corage H.

"No outrage is  
so common,  
nothing so  
wrong but it  
may be re-  
formed by  
gentle  
language."

For ther is non so furious outrage,  
Nor no mateer so ferr out of the weie, 408  
But that be mene of gracious language  
And faire speche may a man conveie  
To al resoun meekli for to obeie, —  
Bi an exauple which I reherse shall 412  
Weel to purpos and is historiall.

"When Achilles  
was in his  
wrath nothing  
could so still  
the tempest of  
his rage but  
the sweet sound  
of a harp."

¶ The hardi kniht, [the] cruel Achilles,  
Whan hatful ire assailed his corage, 416  
Ther was no mene with hym to trete of pes,  
To stille the tempest of his doolful rage,  
Sauf onli this, which dede his ire asswage  
Bi attempraunce tobeien to resoun,  
When of an harpe he herde the sueete soun. 420

"And in like  
manner gentle  
language can  
bring men to  
peace who were  
pawed by  
division."

Which instrument bi his gret suet[e]nesse [p. 303]  
Put al rancour out of his remembraunce,  
Wrestid hym ageyn to al gladnesse,  
From hym auoidyng al rancour & greuaunce. 424  
Semblabli, faire speche and daliaunce  
Set men in reste in rewmys heer & yonder  
Bi good langage that wer ferr assonder."

With these  
wordes Bochas  
became more  
affable and  
spoke pleasantly  
about his work,  
and besought  
Fortune to  
help him on  
with his book,

With these woordes Bochas wex debonaire, 428  
Toward Fortune as he cast his look,  
Withdrouh his rancour & gan speke faire  
Touchyng his labour which he upon hym took,  
Besechyng hir for to forthre his book, 432  
That his name, which was litil knowe,  
Be good report myhte be ferther blowe.

so that his  
fame, as yet  
shrouded in  
darknesse, might  
shine forth to  
all people.

That his fame myhte ferther spreede,  
Which stood as yit shroudid in dirknesse, 436  
Bi hir fauour his name forth to leede,  
His book to foorthre doon hir bysynesse  
Bi good report to yiue it a brihtnesse,  
With laureat stremys shad foorth to peeplis all, 440  
Bi foryetilnesse that it neuer appall.

This was the  
request that he  
made to For-  
tune, who after  
a little while  
began to smile  
and answered:

This was the bille which that Iohn Bochas  
Made vnto Fortune with ful humble stile.  
Whan Fortune hadde conceyuyd al his\* caas, 444  
Sobirli stood and gan [to] stynte a while,

421. sootnesse H. 430. to speke H.  
444. his] this B. 445. to] om. J.

And glad of cheer[e] aftir she gan smyle  
 On myn auctour, & with a fressh visage  
 In sentence spak to hym this language:

448

[*Hic loquitur Fortuna.*] <sup>1</sup>

¶ "Soothli," quod she, "I see thi besynesse,  
 Of mortal men, how corious that thei bee,  
 How thei studie bi gret ausyynesse  
 Off my secretes for to been preue,  
 To knowe the conceitis hid withynne me  
 And my counsaillies, ye men doon al your peyne,  
 Al-be nat lightly\* ye may therto atteyne.

"Truly, I see  
 how curious  
 you men are  
 to learn my  
 secrets,  
 although you  
 do not come by  
 them easily.

452

In this mateer your witt doth neuer feynte,  
 Ymagynyng liknessis in your mynde,  
 Lik your conceitis ye forge me & peynte,  
 Sumtyme a woman with wenges set behynde,  
 And portreye me with eien that be blynde.  
 Cause off al this, breeffi to expresse,  
 Is your owne coueitous blyndnesse!

"You imagine  
 me in all  
 forms: some-  
 times a woman  
 with wings,  
 sometimes  
 blind; but the  
 cause of all this  
 is your own  
 covetousness.

460

Your appetitis most straunge & most dyuers,  
 And euir ful of chaung & doubilnesse,  
 Froward also, malicious & peruers,  
 Be hasti clymbyng to worshepis & richesse,  
 Alway void of trouthe & stabilnesse,  
 Most presumptuous, serche out in al degrees,  
 Falsli tatteyne to worldli dignites.

"You have  
 strange desires,  
 and you are  
 always full of  
 deceit, malicious  
 and perverse,  
 and ever seek-  
 ing worldly  
 dignity.

468

Bochas, Bochas, I parceyue eueri thyng  
 And knowe ful weel the grete difference  
 Hid in thi-silff of woordes & thynkyng,  
 Atween hem bothe the disconvenience.  
 Hastow nat write many gret sentence  
 In thi book to sclauandre with my name,  
 Off hool entent my maneres to diffame?

"Bochas, I  
 understand and  
 know very well  
 the great  
 difference be-  
 tween your  
 words and  
 thought.

472

Thou callest me stepmooder most vnkynde,  
 And sumtyme a fals enchaunteresse,  
 A mermaide with a tail behynde,  
 Off scorn sumwhile me namyng a goddesse,  
 Sumtyme a wich, sumtyme a sorceresse,  
 Fyndere off moordre & of deceitis alle;  
 Thus of malis mortel men me calle!

"Have you not  
 written many  
 a slanderous  
 sentence about  
 me,  
 calling me  
 an unkind step-  
 mother, a false  
 enchantress, a  
 mermaid with  
 a tail behind,  
 an instigator of  
 murder?"

480

455. lightly] likli B — nat] that J, P — may] maynat J, P.  
 481. wich] wrechch H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 124 verso.

"All this in  
despite of me;  
accusing my  
mutabilitie,  
when I refuse  
your covetous  
requests.

Al this is doon in despiht of mee; 484  
Bi accusacioun in many sondri wise  
Ye ofte appeche my mutabilite,  
Namli when I your requestis do despise,  
For tacomplishe your gredi couetise: 488  
Whan ye faille ye leyn on me the wite,  
Off your aduersites me falsli tatwite.

"And only to  
slander me  
you wrote an  
unpleasant story  
of how I  
wrestled with  
Glad Poverty,  
whom you  
favoured, and  
now you beg  
me to help  
you!

And thou of purpos for tesclaundre me  
Hast writt vngoodli a contrarious fable, 492  
How I wrestled with Glad Pouerte,  
To whos parti thou wer faouurable,  
Settest me abak, geyn me thou wer vengable,—  
Now of newe requerist my faouur 496  
The for to helpe & foorthre thi labour!

"As if I were  
changeable as a  
woman or the  
wind! Yet that  
is your doctrine.

As-scauns I am off maneres most chaungable,  
Off condiciouns verray femynyne;  
Now heer, now ther, as the wynd vnstable, 500  
Be thi descripcioun and be thi doctryne,  
To eueri chaung[e] reedi to enclyne,  
As women be & maidnes tendre of age,  
Which of nature be dyuers of corage. 504

"However, I  
am willing to  
help you,

But for to forthre in parti thyn entent, [p. 304]  
That of thi book the processe may procede,  
Be my faouur to the accomplishment  
I am weelwillid to helpe the in thi neede. 508  
Lik thi desir the bettir thou shalt\* speede,  
Whan I am toward with a benigne face  
To speede thy iourne bi support of my grace,

so that both  
your name and  
your surname  
may flourish.  
"I will have  
you begin with  
Saturninus.

That thi name and also thi surname, 512  
With poetis & notable old auctours,  
May be registrid in the Hous off Fame  
Bi supportacioun of my sodeyn faouurs,  
Bi assistence also of my socours 516  
Thi werk texpleite the laurer for to wynne,  
At Saturninus I will that thou begynne.

484. is] *om.* J.

491. tesclaundre] to sclaundre H.

495. ageyn H.

509. the bettir thou shalt] thou shalt the bettir B.

[Here reherceth Fortune hir condiciouns vnto  
 Bochas shewyng how many oon she enhauced  
 for a tyme/ and anoon after hem sodenly  
 ouerthroweth.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Among Romeyns this said[e] Saturnyne  
 Was outraious off condiciouns,  
 Caused in Roome whan he gan maligne  
 Gret debatis and gret sediciouns.  
 And bi his froward conspiraciouns  
 He was sharp enmy ageyn the prudent iuge  
 Callid Metellus,\* deuoid of al refuge. 520

Fro the Capitoille fette with myhti hond,  
 Fond no socour Metellus in the toun, —  
 The same tyme, thou shalt vndirstond,  
 How be myn helpe and supportacioun  
 Oon that was smal of reputacioun  
 Callid Glaueya, in pouert brouht up lowe,  
 Maad consuleer, the stori is weel knowe. 524

A seruauant first & almost set at nouht;  
 And afftirward I made hym fortunat,  
 Lefte neuere til I hadde hym brouht  
 Bi a prerogatiff chose of the senat  
 To been a pretour, an offise of estat.  
 Which also wrouhte be conspiracioun  
 To brynge Metellus to destruccioun. 528

Off whos assent ther was also another  
 Callid Marius, beyng the same yeer,  
 Texpleite this\* tresoun beyng ther [own]sworn brother,  
 Which was also that tyme a consuleer.  
 I, Fortune, made hem ful good cheer,  
 Lik ther desirs gaff hem liberte  
 To banshe Metellus out of ther cite. 532

Of the[s] [thre] Romeyns, the first[e] Saturnyne,  
 And Glaueya was callid the secounde,  
 And Marius, leid out hook & lyne,  
 As I haue told, Metellus to confounde. 536

"This said Saturnine was an outrageous person, who caused great trouble in Rome.

"He was an enemy of Metellus at the time Glaucia became consul.

"I made, Glaucia fortunate; he was at first nothing but a servant.

"He, Marius, and Saturnine conspired to banish Metellus,

and I shewed them my favour, that they might later on themselves come to mischief.

525, 27, 39. Metellius B.

531. Glaueya] Glabeya H, Glabeia J, Glaucia P.

532. the] this H.

542. this] ther B.

548. Glaueya] Glabeya H, Glaucia J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 124 verso.

To ther purpos I was also founde  
 Fauourable to brynge hem to myscheeff, 552  
 As ther stori sheweth an open preeff.

"They banished  
 Marius, and  
 Saturninus pre-  
 ssumed to be  
 called lord and  
 king of Rome:

Thei ban[y]shid hym out of Roome toun;  
 And Saturnynus bi his subtil werkyng  
 Clamb up faste, of hih presumpcioun, 556  
 To be callid of Roome lord & kyng.  
 I gaff hym fauour bamaner fals smylyng,  
 Til at the laste, pleyntli to declare,  
 Off his destruccioun I brouht hym in the snare. 560

but all the  
 while I was  
 deceyving him.

The senatours knowyng the malis  
 Of Saturnyn, which made a gret gadryng  
 Of sondry folk, castyng in his auys  
 Bi ther fauour he myhte be callid kyng. 564  
 Al this while off his vpclymyng  
 I shewed hym duryng a long[e] space  
 Hym to deceyue a benigne face.

"Finally Marius  
 arose and  
 drove him into  
 the Capitol for  
 refuge.

Til Marius, a myhti consuleer, 568  
 To withstonde his presumpcioun  
 Ros with strong hand, & with a knihtli cheer  
 Besette his paleis abouten envircoun,  
 Brak his gatis amyddis of the toun; 572  
 And Saturnynus, void of al fauour,  
 To the Capitoille fledde for socour.

"Marius then  
 besieged the  
 Capitol, and  
 Saturninus,  
 brought to  
 great distress,  
 lost all his  
 riches.

He was forbarrid be Marrius of vitaille,  
 The Capitoille beseged round aboute; 576  
 At the entryng was a strong bataille,  
 On outhur parti slay[e]n a gret route.  
 Thus of my fauour he gan stonde in doute,  
 This Saturnynus brouht in gret distresse, 580  
 His good achetid, lost al his richesse.

"Experience  
 teaches that  
 those who  
 ascend highest  
 on any wheel  
 shall descend  
 when they least  
 expect it; and  
 then I laugh at  
 them.

Experience ful openli men lereth,  
 Such as hiest therupon ascende,  
 Lik as the tourn of my wheel requereth, 584  
 Whan thei lest weene doun thei shal descende.  
 Thei haue no poweer themsiluen to diffende  
 Ageyn my myht, whan thei been ouerthrowe:  
 What do I than, but lauhe & make a mowe! 588

¶ Drusus also born of gret lynage  
 And descendid of ful hih noblesse,  
 Vnto vertu contraire of his corage,  
 Froward founde to al gentillesse;  
 Yit chose he was, the stori doth expresse,  
 Questour of Asia, an offis of degree,  
 For his berth to gouerne that contre.

But ofte tyme vertu nor gentillesse  
 Come nat to heires bi successioun, —  
 Exauple in Drusus, the stori berth witnessse,  
 Which bothe of corage and disposicioun  
 Was euer froward off condicioun.  
 For which lat men deeme as thei mut needis,  
 Nat afftir berth but afftir the deedis.

Vertues alle in hym wer set aside:  
 Slouh to been armyd, hatid cheualrie,  
 Most coueitous, deynous, ful of pride,  
 His deedis froward, ful of trecherie.  
 To hih estat I dede hym magnefie,  
 Yit al my gifftes in hym ne myhte stretche,  
 For heer tofor the, he komēch lik a wrechche.

He dar for shame nat shewen his visage,  
 So ferr disclaundrid is his wrechidnesse,  
 Whos couetise and vicious outrage  
 Falsli causid bi his doubilnesse,  
 Maguldusa, a prince of gret noblesse,  
 Betrashed was for meede to the kyng  
 Callid Boccus bi Drusus fals werkyng.

What maner torment or what greuous peyne  
 Wer compotent, couenable or condigne  
 To hym that can outward flatre &\* feyne,  
 And in his herte couertli maligne,  
 As Drusus dede, which shewed many a signe  
 To Maguldusa of loue and freendliheede;  
 Vndirnethe fals tresoun hid in deede.

But Maguldusa, lik a manli kniht,  
 Geyn kyng Boccus hath hymself socourid,  
 Whan he bi doom was iugid ageyn riht  
 Of an olifaunt for to be deuourid.  
 Scapid freeli, & aftir that labourid

[p. 305] "Drusus, born of high lineage and contrary to all virtue was chosen quaestor of Asia.

592

596 "But it often happens that neither virtue nor gentility are inherited by heirs: we must judge men by their actions rather than their birth.

600

604 "Drusus was lazy, covetous, disdainful and full of treachery. "I could not help him. "Here he comes before you like a wretch,

608

612 and dares not shew his face for shame. He betrayed Magulsa to Bocchus.

616

620 "And what torment were appropriate to him who can outwardly flatter and inwardly hate, as Drusus did?

624 "But Magulsa, sentenced to be devoured by an elephant, escaped and afterwards slew Drusus in Rome.

628

595. that] þe H. 596. gentillesse H. 597. Come] cam H.

614. Magulsa P.

618. competent H, J, R 3, H 5, P. 619. &] or B.

Taquite hymself[e] throuh his hih renoun,  
Slouh fals Drusus myd of Roome toun.

"Bochas, men  
blame me for  
being the cause  
of the destruc-  
tion of Scipio,

¶ Bochas, also, men put the lak in mee,  
That I was cause of the destruccioun 632

Be my contrarious mutabilite  
Off the notable famous Scipioun,  
Which in the tyme of Sensoryn Catoun  
Gat the tryumphe for many gret victorie 636  
To putte his name perpetuel[ly] in memorie.

consul and chief  
bishop of Rome  
at the time of  
the wars be-  
tween Cesar  
and Pompey.

For his meritis chose a consuleer  
And cheff bisshop to gouerne ther cite,  
To al the senat patroun most enteer, 640  
Most famous off name and dignite,  
Saued Romeyns from al aduersite,  
Tyme whan the werre dreedful & despitous  
Gan atween Pompeie & Cesar Iulius. 644

"When he stood  
highest in my  
favour he was  
suddenly cast  
down from my  
wheel; but it  
was by the  
malice of the  
Romans.

Thus whan the said[e] famous Scipioun  
Was thoruh my fauour acountid most notable,  
He fro my wheel was sodenli cast doun,  
Which neuer in woord nor deede was coupable. 648  
But the Romeyns malicious & vnstable, —  
Bi ther hangman first cheynid in prisoun,  
Afftir rakked, ther geyned no raunsoun.

"They hung  
his body high  
aloft for a  
spectacle, al-  
though he had  
saved them  
from all ad-  
versity.

Thus he that hadde auailed hem so ofte, 652  
To saue hymself fond socour on no side;  
His dede bodi thei heeng it hih alofte  
For a spectacle longe ther tabide.  
Thus gerissli my giftes I deuide, 656  
Stound[e]meel, now freend, now aduersarie,  
Rewarde goode with guerdouns ful contrarie.

"My fickleness  
was well shewn  
in the fate of  
Scipio.

This was expert ful weel in Scipioun:  
Gan with ioie, endid in wrechidnesse. 660

"I also made  
Fanaticus, born  
a churl, ascend  
to high degree,  
for my amuse-  
ment.

Bochas, remembre, mak heeroff menciou, n,  
And off Fanaticus, how I off gentillesse  
Made hym ascende to notable hih prowessse;  
Yit bookis sey[e]n touchyng his kynreede, 664  
Manli of persone, born a cherl\* in deede.

"He rose to  
royal estate by  
sleight,

For my disport[e] with a glad visage  
I sette hym up ful hih upon my wheel,  
Gaff hym lordship, out of louh seruage; 668

631. in] on H. 662. gentillesse H, R 3, H 5.  
665. born a cherl] a cherl born B, J, P.



To doon hym fauour it liked n̄e ful weel.  
 Wherfor Bochas, his stori euerideel,  
 Note it weel, & in especial  
 How he be sleihte cam to estat roiall.

672

Be sleihti feynyng to dyuers folk he tolde,  
 How that he spak with Cirra the goddesse  
 At eueri hour pleyntli whan he wolde,  
 Of presumpcioun descryued hir liknesse,  
 Seide also how that she of hir goodnesse  
 Hadde grauntid hym, his staat to magnefie,  
 Duryng his lyff a sperit off prophecie.

[p. 306] telling people  
 how he could  
 converse at will  
 with a goddess,  
 and how she  
 had given him  
 a spirit of  
 prophecy.

676

And furthermore the peple for to blynde  
 He fantasied bi a crafft vnkouth,  
 Withynne a scale, the stori maketh mynde,  
 Of a note to haue fyr in his mouth.  
 Blewe it out sparklyng north & south,  
 Affermede, wherwith folk wer blent,  
 It was a sperit to hym fro heuene sent.

680 "He blew fire  
 from a nutshell  
 in his mouth,  
 and said it was  
 a spirit sent  
 to him from  
 heaven.

684

Bi which he wrouhte many gret vertu,  
 Gadred peple til he hadde in deede  
 Two thousand cherlis at his retenu,  
 Which aftirward, his purpos for to speede,  
 To sixti thousand encreced, as I reede.  
 I suffrid al; seruid hym at the tide  
 Til al the contre gruchchede at his pride.

688 "Finally he had  
 60,000 followers;  
 and I permitted  
 all, until the  
 country grum-  
 bled at his  
 pride.

692

Thouh of berthe he was but a vileyn,  
 Roos up of nouht bi sodeyn auenture,  
 My geri fauour made hym to be seyn  
 Roial of port, dede his besi cure  
 To reise his baner, wered a cote-armure,  
 And be my gracious supportacioun  
 Brouht gret peple to his subieccioun.

Born a serf, he  
 rose from  
 nothing;

696

At the laste my lust gan to appall,\*  
 Towardis hym nat beyng fauourable;  
 Doun fro my wheel anon I made hym fall,  
 For bi Romeyns was sent a gret constable  
 Callid Poppenna, a prynce ful notable,  
 Which fill on hym, venquissid hym anon,  
 Slouh and outraid his cherlis euerichon.

700

but at last I  
 wearied of him  
 and made him  
 fall from my  
 wheel.  
 704 "He was de-  
 feated by Per-  
 penna and  
 hanged, and his  
 churils were  
 scattered and  
 slain.

682. scale] shale J, P. 691. encreced] om. H.  
 701. to] om. J, P, H 5 — tappall B, H, R 3.

- "I remain with  
no man always.
- Hymself was hangid on an hih gibet;  
Summe of his meyne wer cast in prisoun. 708  
Thus to his pride I gaff a gret tripet  
And fro my wheel I caste hym lowe down  
In his most hiest domynacioun, — 712  
Took non heed wher he dede lauhe or mourne,  
For with no man I do alway soiourne.
- "Bochas. I can  
both further  
and injure: see  
how Athenion,  
once a shepherd,  
became a rob-  
ber.
- ¶ Bochas," quod Fortune, "tak good heed also  
How I can bothe foorthre & disauaile: 716  
For example see houh Athenyo,  
That whilom was a shepperde in Ytaille,  
A brigault aftir, marchautis to assaille,  
Lay in a-wait beside a gret mounteyn, 720  
Off fugityues he was made a capteyn.
- "He slew his  
lord and broke  
out of many  
prisons, and  
for a tyme I  
helped him  
gather churls  
together and  
make war on  
Rome.
- Slouh first his lord, a riche senatour,  
Bi violence brak many strong prisoun;  
And for a tyme I gaff hym gret fauour 724  
To gadre robbours aboute hym enviroun, —  
Alle the cherlis of that regeoun  
He assemblede thoruh his iniquite,  
To holde a werre with Roome the cite. 728
- "He besieged  
castles and  
slew and  
robbed through-  
out the country  
and wore pur-  
ple like a  
king.
- Beseged castellis, brak down myhti tours,  
Slouh & robbede aboute in ech contre,  
Spoiled paleis of worthi senatours, —  
Title hadde he non sauff title of volunte, — 732  
Took upon hym of pride & cruelte  
For to be clad in purple lik a kyng,  
Bar a sceptre among his men ridyng.
- and a coif  
embroidered  
with rich stones  
on his head.  
"I laughed to  
think of him,  
a false robber,  
upheld by my  
favour.
- Vpon his hed ordeyned for the nonys 736  
His gold her tressid lik an emperour,  
A coiffe enbroudid al of riche\* stonis —  
Me list to lauhhe, that a fals robbour  
Be supportacioun of my geri fauour, 740  
Which last nat longe, — for aftir in short while  
As is my custum I dede hym begile.
- "Finally a con-  
sul came down  
from Rome and  
hanged him.
- I suffred hym, made hym feyned cheer,  
As I haue do to othir mo ful ofte, 744  
Till down fro Roome was sent a consuleer,  
Which took hym proudli & heeng hym hih alofte,

709. *is replaced by 702 in H.*

734. purple H. 737. goldher B.

738. coiffe] corff H, coive R 3 — of riche] riche off B.

- His cherlis slayn; & summe of hem nat softe  
 In cheynys bounde, for short conclusioun, 748  
 Wer dempt be lawe to deien in prisoun.
- ¶ Bi which[e] stori[es], Bochas, thou maist lere  
 A gret parti of my condicioun.  
 But now in haste a stori thou shalt heere, 752  
 How in the yeer fro the fundacioun  
 Mor than sixe hundred — I meene of Roome toun —  
 Was a gadryng & a gret cumpanye  
 Togidre sworn bi fals conspiracye, 756
- Them to withdrawe fro the obeisaunce\* [p. 307]  
 Of a tribun callid Lodonee,  
 Which for knihthod hadde gouernaunce,  
 And was sent doun fro Roome [the] cite 760  
 With myhti hand to reule a gret contre  
 Callid Chaumpayne; & pleynli for to seie,  
 The peple ther list hym nat obeie.
- Thre score & foure wer of hem in noumbre 764  
 That named wer[e] cheeff conspiratours,  
 Which that caste hem ther capteyn to encoumbre  
 With multitude of theuis & robbours,  
 Which ches among hem to been ther supportours 768  
 Thre myhti capteyns, off which ther was oon  
 Callid Spartharchus, cheuest of echon.
- Gadred cherlis, made hemsiluen strong,  
 On an hih hill took ther duellyng place, 772  
 Hauyng no reward, wer it riht or wrong,  
 To spoille the contre, bestis to enchace.  
 I cherished hem with a benigne face  
 For a sesoun, & gaff hem liberte 776  
 Bi fals rauyne to robbe the contre.
- What thyng mor cruel in comparisoun  
 Or mor vengable of will & nat off riht,  
 Than whan a cherl hath domynacioun!  
 Lak of discrecioun bleendith so the siht 780  
 Of comouneres, for diffaute of liht,

750. stories] stori J, P.

755. &amp;] om. J, P — gret] om. H.

757. obeisaunce] presence B, J. 759. hadde] &amp; H.

760. the] om. J, H.

770. Spartharchus] Spartachus R 3, Spartacus P (throughout) —  
 cheuest] cheff H.

771. hym silf H. 781. siht] liht H. 782. liht] siht H.

"From these stories, Bochas, you may learn to know me.  
 "Now I will tell you how there was a conspiracy about the year 600 of Rome,

when the people of Campania would not obey the tribune.

"There were three score and four chief conspirators, and Spartacus was their captain.

"They gathered churls together, and, sallying forth from a hill stronghold, ravaged the country.

"For a time I helped them; but what is more cruel than a knave who has power to rule!

- Whan thei haue power contrees to gouerne  
Fare lik a beeste [that] can nothyng disseerne. 784
- "They were called gladiators, who fought wild animals, and they encamped on Mt. Vesuvius. Gladiatores folkes dede hem calle;  
For ther suerdis wer with steel maad fyn  
For to fihte geyn wylde beestis alle,  
As leouns, beres, bores, wilde swyn. 788  
And the mounteyn wher thei dede lyn  
Callid Venuse, and thoruh ther cruelte  
Slouh & robbede aboute in ech contre.
- "Spartacus was of low birth and came of nothing and Claudius, who was sent down from Rome to protect the country, was driven away. Spartharchus was ther cheeff capteyn, 792  
Brouht up of nouht & born of louh degre;  
But Claudius, a myhti, strong Romayn,  
Was sent with power fro Roome the cite  
For to diffende & saue that contre, 796  
The hill besegyng afforn hem as he lay:  
He was rebukid, bete & dryue away.
- although many of Spartacus' men were slain. Many of them that kepte the mounteyn  
Wer hurt that day, the stori tellith thus, 800  
Amongis which was slayn a gret capteyn  
That was felawe vnto Spartharchus.  
As I fynde, he hihte Ynomaus;  
For whos deth was take so gret vengauce, 804  
That al the contre felte therof greuauce.
- "Two consuls were then sent against him, and both were put to flight, to the shame and fear of the Senate. Thei of the mounteyn, alle off oon assent,  
Withoute merci or remyssionn,  
Most vengable, haue robbed & Ibrent 808  
Al the contre aboute hem enviroon,  
Til too consuleris cam fro Roome doun:  
The firste off hem callid Lentulus,  
Bothe put to fiht be said[e] Spartarchus. 812
- "Finally, Crassus came down with a legion and slew 36,000 of Spartacus' followers. Wherof the Romeyns gretli wer dismaied.  
The senatours off indignacionn,  
Bothe ashamed and in hemsilff affraied,  
Sente oon Crassus, a gret lord of the toun, 816  
With the noubre off a legioun.  
And whan that he on Spartarchus first sette,  
Slouh of his men six\* thousand whan thei mette.

792. Spartacus H, Spartachus R 3. 798. dryue] dreven H.  
802. Spartachus H, R 3, Spargachus H 5.  
803. Oenomaus P. 808. vengeably H — brent P, H 5.  
812. be] the J — Spartachus H, R 3.  
818, 22, 34. Spartachus H, R 3. 819. six] vj B.

- And aftirward beside a gret ryueer 820  
 Callid Salaire thei hadde a gret bataile,  
 Wher Spartarchus stood in gret daungeer;  
 For his cheer and contenance gan faille.  
 Thretti thousand clad in plate & maille 824  
 Wer slayn that day, ther geyned no raunsoun,  
 Al ther capteyns assigned to prisoun.
- Withoute al this, as maad is menciou[n],  
 Sixti thousand in the feeld lay ded, 828  
 And six thousand wer sent to prisoun,  
 The feeld with blood[e] steyned & maad red.  
 And foure thousand, quakyng in ther dreed,  
 Wer thilke day, aftir the Romeyn gise, 832  
 Take to merci, resceyued to franchise,
- And Spartarchus at mischeeff put to fliht.  
 Whan I from hym turnyd my visage,  
 He loste his cheer; he loste also his myht 836  
 Whan I appalled the fyn of his passage.  
 And for he was a cherl off his lynage,  
 Off his ences I likid nothyng weel,  
 Therfor vnwarli I cast hym fro my wheel. 840
- Off [my] maneres to make a gretter preeff, [p. 308]  
 Ther was another famous gret robbour,  
 Which thoruh Spaigne was a disclaundrid theeff.  
 And for he dradde of iustise the rigour, 844  
 Trustyng he sholde fynde in me socour,  
 Callid Viriatus,\* he Spaigne anon forsook  
 And to Roome the riht[e] weie he took.
- Gadred meyne of his condicioun 848  
 Of eueri sect to make hymselfen strong,  
 Theuys, robbours of eueri regioun,  
 Many a cherl was medlid hem among.  
 His name tencece, wer it riht or wrong, 852  
 What-euer he gat in cite or village,  
 With his soudiours he partede the pillage.
- Thus be myn helpe he cam to gret richesse,  
 Which brouhte in pride & presumpcioun; 856  
 He nat prouided, of my doubilnesse,  
 Gan to maligne ageyn[e]s Rome toun;

"6000 were put  
in prison and  
4000 taken to  
mercy.

"Spartacus fled;  
and I cast him  
from my wheel,  
for he was but  
a churl.

"There was an-  
other robber  
called Viriathus,  
who lived in  
Spain,

and gathering  
men set out to  
attack Rome;

for through my  
aid he had  
become rich  
and proud.  
But he was  
slain by Scipio,  
son of Lepidus.

845. fynde in me] in me fynde H, P.

846. Viriatus] Vriatus H, R 3, J, Vrinatus B, J, Vyratus H 5.

854. the] his H. 858. ageynes] geyn H.

But bi the prudence of laste Scipioun,  
Sone of Lepidus, makyng therof no bost, 860  
He slay[e]n was bi them he trustede most.

"Thus, Bochas,  
you may see  
my power and  
my mutability.

Bi which example[s] notable of remembraunce  
Shewed heer-toforn, Iohn Bochas, vnto the,  
Thow maist knowe in parti my puissaunce, 864  
Mi sodeyn chaungis, my mutabilite.  
And for tauoide al ambiguite,  
To declare the somme of myn entent,  
Grete Marrius to the I do presente. 868

"And now I  
present to you  
great Marius,  
clad in black,  
with downcast  
look and  
tangled grey  
hair.

Blak his weede & his habite also,  
His hed vnkempt, his lokkis hor & gray,  
His look doun cast in tokne of sorwe & wo,  
On his cheekis the salt[e] teris lay, 872  
Which bar record off his dedli affray, —  
Wherfor, Bochas, do thi penne dresse  
To descryue his mortal heuynesse.

"His robe was  
stained with  
Roman blood,  
and all his  
delight lay in  
slaughter.

His robe steyned was with Romeyn blood, 876  
His suerd ay redi whet to do vengauce,  
Lik a tiraunt most furious & wood,  
In slauhtre & moordre set al his plesaunce.  
Yit nat for thi I gaff hym gouernaunce 880  
Ouer the peepel, ros on my wheel up faste,  
But as vnwarli doun I dede hym caste.

"Great strife  
arose between  
him and Sulla;  
but I made  
them both end  
in mischief.

Tween hym & Scilla the woful dedli stryues  
At large heerafftir, Bochas, thou shalt write, — 884  
How many Romeyns lost bi them ther lyues,  
I will also in ordre that thou endite.  
And yiff I shall rebuke hem & atwite,  
As I fro nouht made hem in honour shyne, 888  
So I ageynward made hem in myscheef fyne.

"I give you in  
charge to write,  
when you have  
leisure, about  
Mithridates,

Forget nat also the dedli pitous fate  
Off hym that was so notable in his lyff, —  
I meene the grete famous Mitridate, 892  
Whos name yit is ful kouth and ryff,  
To whom I gaff a gret prerogatiff,  
Fourti wyntir, the deede was weel seene,  
Ageyn Romeyns the werre to susteene. 896

862. which] whos H — example J.

896. werre] werris H.

- For which heer-aftir I gyue it the in charge  
 Of Mitridate the stori set along;  
 Whan thou hast leiseer & a space large,  
 Remembre his conquest & his deedis strong, 900  
 And how that I medlid me among,  
 For al his noblesse and felicite,  
 To yiuè hym part of gret aduersite."
- ¶ Next in ordre, aftir hir owne chois, 904  
 Fortune, vntrusti vpon ech partie,  
 To Iohn Bochas hath conueied fro Parthois  
 Strong Herodes regnyng in Parthie.  
 "Loo, Iohn," quod she, "tak heed of this storie, — 908  
 Al his kynreede, yiff it be weel out souht,  
 Wer be Sithiens chacid & brouht to nouht.
- And yit, for al my mutabilite,  
 Somme of hem which stood[e] disespeired 912  
 I restored to ther dignite,  
 Vnto which whan thei wer repeired,  
 This Herodes was hyndred & appeired  
 Bi my chaunges for his hatful pride, 916  
 Whan he lest wende, vnwarli set aside."
- ¶ Su yng aftir withynne a litil while,  
 This gerissh ladi of condicioun  
 Gan an illouh falsli for to smyle, 920  
 Lookyng on Bochas, brouhte with hir doun  
 A myhti prince, which in Rome toun  
 Hadde in his daies notable pris & fame,  
 Al-be that she expressed nat his name. 924
- Bochas thanne his hed gan doun declyne, [p. 309]  
 Seyng that prince, of face disfigured,  
 Of suspecioun gan to ymagyne,  
 Whan he his mynde fulli hath recurid, 928  
 Be certeyn toknis & signes weel assured  
 It was Pompeie, surquedous of estat,  
 Which with Cesar so longe was at debat.
- Disconsolat thoruh his vnhappi caas, 932  
 His face soiled with water of the se,  
 Tyme whan Fotynus & cruel Achillas  
 Drowned his bodi of furious enmyte.  
 His face disfigured at the solempnite 936
- whom I helped  
 make war  
 against Rome  
 for forty  
 years."
- Next in order  
 came Orodes  
 of Parthia. And  
 Fortune said,  
 "Lo, Iohn, all  
 his kindred  
 were defeated  
 by the Scy-  
 thians, although  
 some were re-  
 stored to their  
 dignity."
- Soon afterwards  
 Fortune began  
 to smile  
 falsely, and  
 caused a mighty  
 Roman prince  
 to appear.
- And Bochas,  
 looking closely  
 at his disfigured  
 countenance,  
 saw that it was  
 Pompey, who  
 was so long at  
 war with  
 Cæsar.
- Disconsolate, his  
 face was soiled  
 with smoke and  
 by the water of  
 the sea;

911. yit] þat H. 916. Bi] to H.

920. illouh] alouh R 3, yll laughyng P.

With smokes blake, dedli & mortall,  
Callid of clerkis the feeste funerall.

for Codrus had  
caused his  
corse to be  
burnt.  
Fortune then  
said in scorn:

Codrus caused that the corps was brent  
And consumed into asshes dede; 940

To Cesar<sup>a</sup> aftir his hed was born & sent  
Vpon a pole, his stori who list reede.  
Aftir al this, Bochas took good heede,  
How Fortune bamaner mokerie, 944  
In scorn of hym gan thus to specefie:

"I raised his  
glory to the  
heavens and  
enabled him to  
give battle to  
Cesar,

"Vp to the heuene aftir his deuys  
I gan enhaunce & encrece his glorie.  
Bi my fauour I gaff hym many a pris, 948  
Conquest of kynges with many gret victorie;  
And mor to putte his noblesse in memorie,  
Bi my support thoruh his cheualrie,  
With Cesar Iulius to holde chaumpartie. 952

and while I  
shewed him my  
favour his  
fame arose until  
I withdrew it  
again.

And whil that I my fauour did applie  
Toward hym his victories to assure,  
His fame aros, til that in Thesalie  
I gan withdrawe his parti to socoure, 956  
Suffryng his enmyes make disconfiture  
Vpon this Pompeie, hyndred in my siht,  
Whan he to Lesbos at myscheeff took his fliht.

"Finally he was  
taken and  
slain: I gave  
him up, and he  
lost his head.  
"Yet no man  
takes heed of  
my changes,  
except that you  
are busy to set  
them in your  
book.

Bi the seruauntis of yonge Tholome, 960  
Regnyng in Egypt, Pompeie in his dreed  
Was take & slayn; he fond no\* help in mee:  
I gaf hym vp; & so he lost his hed.  
Yit of my chaunges no man taketh heed, 964  
Nor how vnseurli I cast my dreedful look,  
Sauf thou art besi to sette hem in thi book."

Bochas astoned, parcel of hir presence,  
Bothe of cheer[e], face and contenance, 968  
And in this while hauyng his aduertence,  
Thouhte he sauh a maneer resemblaunce  
Of a persone, which stood in gret greuaunce;  
Til at the laste Fortune caste hir sihte 972  
Toward Bochas, & told[e] what he hihte:

947. I] *om.* H.

957. make] *makyng* a H, make a P, R 3, H 5.

962. no] *non* B.

965. vnseurli] *vnseemly* H, *vnsemly* R 3, H 5.

969. his] *this* H. 971. which] *which þat* H, R 3.



“This is,” quod she, “pleynli to termyne,  
 The famous man, [the] prynce of elloquence  
 That gaf to Latynes the scole & the doctrine  
 Of rethorik, as welle of that science.  
 For which I will thou do thi dilligence  
 To write with othir of this Tullius  
 Al hool the caas, & gynne at Marrius.” 976

“This is Tullius,” said she, “the famous man who taught the Romans the arts of rhetoric and oratory.”

¶ These woordes saide, Fortune made an eende;  
 She beet hir wynges & took hir to the fliht:  
 I cannat seie what weie she dede weende,  
 Sauf Bochas tellith, lich an aungel briht 984  
 At hir partyng she shewed a gret liht.  
 But as soone as she gan disapeere,  
 He took his penne [&] wrot as ye shal heere.

Telling Bochas to begin with Marius, Fortune flapped her wings and flew away in a great light.

[How Gayus Marrius, of low birthe born/ cam to  
 high estat whiche blent with couetise after many  
 grete batailes deied att mischeef.]<sup>1</sup>

**H**EEER Bochas gynneth to tellen of þe man 988  
 Callid in his tyme Gayus Marius,  
 Born at Aprina[s], a castel of Tuscan,  
 Sone of a carpenteer, the stori tellith thus,  
 Pursued armys, manli & vertuuous; 992  
 Thoruh al Rome nor in that contre  
 Was ther no man hold so strong as he.

Gaius Marius was born at Arpinum in Tuscany. He was the son of a carpenter,

Disciplyne and gret subtilite  
 He hadde also, as bookis specesfe, 996  
 Prudence, manhod and habilite  
 Bothe in armys and in cheualrie,  
 Most famous holde toward that partie,  
 Withynne a while, myn auctour seith certeyn, 1000  
 Chose a tribun & a gret capteyn.

strong and well disciplined, prudent and able in arms.

But fro the gynyng of his tendre age,  
 As histories put in remembraunce,  
 He was priked so sore in his corage 1004  
 Bagredi fret of long contynuaunce,  
 Neuer to staunch[e] with non habundaunce; —

Chosen first a tribune, he later became a great captain, but was always covetous.

975. 2nd the] *om.* J. 977. that] þe H.

987. &] *om.* H, J, R 3.

988. tellen] writen H.

990. Aprina J, Arpynas H 5, Arpinas P.

1003. histories] stories H. 1005. by a gredy H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 126 recto.

- The world nor Fortune, with al ther gret richesse,  
Suffised nat tappese his gredynesse. 1008
- A diviner coun-  
celled him to  
go to Rome,  
where he  
should not fail  
to rise to high  
office. Entryng a temple he fond a dyuynour, [p. 310]  
Counsailed [him] ther bi his dyuynaille  
Tentre Rome & holde ther soiour,  
Bi good ays and knihtli apparaille; 1012  
Made hym promys that he shal'nat faille  
Tatteyne be fauour of the comounte  
To gret offis & staat in the cite.
- He became a  
consul, although  
the Senate  
scorned his low  
birth. Fauour of comouns brouht hym to hih estat, 1016  
Bi them resceyued vnto the dignite  
Of consuleer, al-be that the senat  
Hadde disdeyn off his felicite,  
Because he was born of lough degre. 1020  
Grauntid to hym after be the toun  
To conquere rewmys a commyssioun.
- Granted a com-  
mission to lead  
the Roman  
legions, he con-  
quered Numidia  
and captured  
Jugurtha, for  
which he was  
given a triumph. He gat the prouynce thoruh his hih renoun  
Of Numedie, as he dede hem assaile, 1024  
And took the kyng of that regioun  
Callid Iugurta proudli in bataile.  
For which emprise bi marcial apparaille  
He gat the tryumphe, thoruh the toun ridyng, 1028  
Because onli for takyng of that kyng.
- The commons  
believed that  
all their pros-  
perity lay in  
his hand; And for he was a persone so notable  
For many famous sodeyn gret victorie,  
Namli in conquest preued proffitable, 1032  
To al the comoun, as put is in memorie;  
And for thenres of his renoun & glorie,  
Bi thoppynyoun hool of the cite,  
In his hand lay al ther prosperite. 1036
- for he brought  
many nations  
into subjection  
to Rome, and  
overcame the  
Cimbri and the  
Tigurini, who  
presumptuously  
took upon  
themselves to  
pass the moun-  
tains of Italy. Ageyn a people that callid was Tymbrois,  
Them to conquere fro Rome he was sent down,  
Also ageyn the boistous Tigurnois,  
Gadred togidre of many nacioun. 1040  
Alle them he brouhte to subieccioun,  
Lik as Romeyns hadde afforn desired,  
Because thei hadde ageyn ther toun conspired.

1010. him] *om.* J. 1012. good] goodly H. 1016. hih] gret H.  
1031. gret] *om.* H. 1032. Namli] manly H.  
1033. comoun] comons H.  
1036. ther] þe H.

- Thei took upon hem of fals presumpcioun 1044  
 To passen alle the mounteyns of Itaille,  
 First discourfited, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 Thre Romeyn dukis fell in bataille,  
 Four scorre thousand clad in plate & maile 1048  
 Slayn of Romeyns, the stori is weel knowe,  
 Vnder Thalpies at myscheef ouerthrowe.
- This Marrius of marcial auenture  
 In Germanye hadde a gret bataille 1052  
 With Tewtobochus, a geaunt of stature,  
 Put first to fliht with al his apparaille;  
 For Marrius dide hym so sore assaille,  
 At the chas[e] proudli born to grounde, 1056  
 Maugre his miht, tak & in cheynis bounde.
- Marrius aftir with his host hym drouh  
 Toward the peeple off Cymbrois for to fih<sup>t</sup>:  
 Too hundred thousand\*, I fynde, of hem he slouh, 1060  
 Eihte thousand take, thre thousand put to fih<sup>t</sup>;  
 Kyng Bolerus, a ful famous kniht,  
 Slayn in the feelde, for al his gret[e] pride,  
 Ageyn Marrius as he dide ride. 1064
- That day of Cymbrois was al the peeple slay<sup>n</sup>,  
 The women aftir he list nat to reserue;  
 Yit thei proffered & wolde haue be ful fayn  
 Ther chastite deuoutli to obserue, 1068  
 In the temple of Vesta for to serue.  
 But ther request[e] for he list nat heere,  
 With hym thei fauht; echon slay<sup>n</sup> ifeere.
- Except that summe, whan thei sauh non othir 1072  
 Remedi, of purpōs thei wer set,  
 Euerich of them to slen & moordren othir;  
 And somme thouhte also that it was bet  
 To hang hemsilff vpon an hih gibet, 1076  
 Than tabide of Marius the outrage,  
 Perpetueli to lyuen in seruage.
- Thus Marius of thre naciouns  
 Thoruh his conquest compliss<sup>h</sup>ed the victorie. 1080  
 With prisoneres of sondri regiouns

He also put  
the Teutones to  
flight and took  
their leader  
prisoner.

Afterwards he  
slew 200,000 of  
the Cimbri and  
captured 8000.

They were all  
slain, even the  
women, who  
would gladly  
have served in  
the Temple of  
Vesta.

Some slew one  
another and the  
rest hanged  
themselves.

Thus Marius  
conquered three  
nations.  
He was chosen  
consul six times.

1047. Thre] þe H. 1050. Vnder] ovir H.

1060. thousand] peeple B, J.

1062. Bolerus] Borelus H 5, Beleus P.

1080. compliss<sup>h</sup>ed] accompliss<sup>h</sup>id H, R 3.

- Entred Roome to his ences of glorie,  
 With special laudes notable of memorie:  
 First the tryumphe, a guerdoun synguleer, 1084  
 He tymes sexe chose a consuleer.
- Fortune was favourable to  
 him at first, but  
 later on she  
 became adverse.  
 Thus Fortune was to hym fauourable,  
 To sette hym up in worldli dignites  
 For a sesoun; but for she was chaungable, 1088  
 Among hir gifftes & gret prosperites  
 She gaf hym part of gret aduersites:  
 And specialli the tyme acountid than,  
 Tween hym & Scilla whan the werris gan. 1092
- Lucius Sulla,  
 Marius's great  
 enemy,  
 Lucyus Scilla abidyng in Chaumpayne, [p. 311]  
 Marrius at Roome tho present,  
 Whan the diuysioun gan atween hem tweyne,  
 Ech to other contrarie of entent, 1096  
 Malencolius and impacient,  
 Which of bothe, the stori weel conceyued,  
 To gouerne sholde sonnest be receyued.
- marched on  
 Rome against  
 him,  
 Al sodenli, wher it wer riht or wrong, 1100  
 Toward Roome takyng his passage,  
 Ageyn Marrius to make hym seluen strong,  
 Gan slen & brenne, & of gret outrage,  
 Wilful, hasti, furious of corage, 1104  
 For sodeyn komyng & vnwar violence  
 Ageyn[e]s hym fond[e] no resistence.
- and entering the  
 city took the  
 Capitol.  
 Too myhti batailles he dede with hym leede,  
 Entryng the cite, gan thoruh the wal[le] myne; 1108  
 With o bataille faste gan hym speede  
 To passe the gate callid Aquilyne  
 (The tothir gat[e] namyd was Colyne),  
 At whos entryng, bi record of the book, 1112  
 Scilla be strengthe the Capitoile took.
- Marius, who fled  
 with his people  
 into a marsh,  
 was cap-  
 tured and sent  
 to prison.  
 But whan Marrius hadde knowlechyng  
 That Scilla hadde so gret poweer & myht,  
 Withoute arest or lenger abidyng, 1116  
 Into a maris Gayus anon riht  
 With al his people took sodenli his fliht.  
 Fet out be strengthe, koude hym nat diffende,  
 Scilla aftir to prisoun dede hym sende. 1120

1089. hir] his H. 1097. Impacient H. 1098. stori] tothir H.  
 1099. sonnest shulde H, sonest shold R 3. 1117. Marish P.  
 1119. be] with H.

Thus the prowesse for a while slepte  
 Of Marrius liggyng in prisoun.  
 Scilla that tyme the Capitoille kepte,  
 Wherbi al Roome stood in subieccioun.  
 And of hatrede in haste he sente doun  
 A sturdi cherl to Marius in his dreed,  
 Whil he lay bounde to smyten of his hed.

Sulla kept Rome  
 under his sub-  
 jection and sent  
 a sturdy knave  
 to smite off  
 Marius's head  
 while he lay  
 bound.

1124

This cherl weel compact of braun & of bonys,  
 Sent of purpos Marrius for toppresse,\*  
 For his strengthe ordeyned for the nonys, —  
 To the prisoun the cherl gan faste hym dresse,  
 Wher Marrius was fetrid in distresse,  
 Fulli in purpos, withoute mor delay,  
 To heuedyn hym in prisoun ther he lay.

1128

1132

Losed hym first, liggyng on his couche;  
 And Marius [a]roos up lik a man,  
 The cherl feerful to smyte or to touche.  
 And Marius ful proudli tho began  
 To entre a place beside of a woman,  
 Fond an asse ther of auenture,  
 Vpon whos bak the se he gan recure.

1136

1140

After he had  
 loosened his  
 bonds the churl  
 was afraid to  
 strike, and  
 Marius escaped  
 on an ass

Toward Affrik ther he fond passage,  
 Bi enprisownyng thouh he wer wex[e] feynt;  
 Yit ther abood, stille in his corage,  
 Hih worthynesse with prudence meynt,  
 Which in his persone wer\* nat [fully] queynt,  
 Ageyn the malis to make a countirtaille,  
 Off proude Scilla the malis eft tassaile.

1144

1148

to the sea and  
 thence to Africa,  
 where he dwelt  
 until he was  
 able to give  
 battle to Sulla  
 again.

Of Itaille rood thoruh the contre,  
 Took his viage towarde\* Roome toun,  
 With foure batailes entreth the cite,  
 Sixe hundrid knihtis be computacioun  
 Slayn in the feeld, as maad is menciou. n.  
 Wher men may seen, who list looke a-ferre,  
 What damage diuysioun doth in werre.

1152

Returning to  
 Rome, he  
 entered the  
 city, with four  
 battalions; and  
 600 knights  
 were slain,

1123 is misplaced at end of stanza and marked a, 1124 is marked b, H.

1128. 2nd of] om. H.

1129. to oppresse B.

1146. wer] was B, H — fully] om. J, P.

1150. towarde] thoruh B.

- including the great consul Octavius, whose head was set on a pole. First bi the manhod off this Marius, 1156  
 In this dyuisioun, the stori who list reede,  
 The grete consul callid Octauius  
 Lost his hed[e] & his lyff in deede; —  
 Vpon a pole whil it dede bleede 1160  
 Was cruelli presentid of entent  
 Tofor the iuges sitting in iugement.
- Merula, priest of the Temple of Jupiter, was also slain, and Crassus and Catulus. Of whos deth[e] summe of hem wer fayn,  
 Summe sori, of loue as thei wer bounde. 1164  
 And in this werre Merula was slayn,  
 Preest in the temple, lik as it is founde,  
 Of Iubiter, with many mortal wounde.  
 The Romeyn slayn that callid was Crassus; 1168  
 With fyr consumyd was proude Catulus.
- Marius held his own against his enemies. Alle his enmyes Marius dede encoumbre,  
 Which ageyn hym be conspiracioun  
 Wer assentid with a ful gret noumbre 1172  
 In ther auys for to haue put hym down,  
 Take from hym his domynacioun.  
 But he abood the torment & the shours,  
 Strong to condempne alle his conspiratours. 1176
- and was chosen consul six times. Finally, Fortune turned away from him. Sixe tymes, afforn rehersed heer, [p. 312]  
 Of condicioun thouh he wer despitous,  
 He was chose so ofte consuleer;  
 Til Fortune gan wexen envious 1180  
 Ageyn this saide cruel Marius,  
 Which made the senat with al the cheualrie  
 To gruchehe ageyn his hatful tirannye.
- At this time Damasippus sent four Romans, In this tyme, the stori maketh mynde, 1184  
 Damasippus, a pretour of the toun,  
 Freendli to Marius & helpyng, as I fynde,  
 Vnder a shadwe of decepcioun  
 Vnto ther cite for to do tresoun, 1188  
 Causyng foure Romeyns come I-feere  
 Toffor Marrius a certeyn day tappeere.
- Scævola, Cotta, Domitius and Antistius to Marius, whom he slew unlawfully. And ther namys to putte in memorie,  
 Sceuola, Carbo and Domycius, 1192  
 The fourthe off them, as seith the stori,  
 Callid in Roome the wise Antistius.

1173. ther] þat H.

1179. often H. 1186. helpyng] helpely H, helply R 3.

1188. do] om. H. 1192. Sevola H — Carbo] Cotta P.

- Togidre assemblid tofor Marrius,  
 He of rancour, geyn iugement or lawe,  
 Made hem be slayn & thoruh the cite drawe. 1196
- Ther bodies aftir wern in Tibre cast  
 Bi cruelte of saide Marius. Their bodies  
 were thrown  
 into the Tiber.  
 Duke Cam-  
 panus aided  
 Sulla,  
 1200
- Alle this while the cruel werre last  
 Tween hym & Scilla, til duk Companyus  
 Cam on the parti, hard[y] & despitous,  
 To helpe Scilla ther baneres first displaid,  
 Wherof al Roome was sodenli affraied. 1204
- At the gate that callid was Colyne  
 Marrie & Scille hadde a gret bataille, —  
 Foure score thousand, the noubre to termyne  
 On Marrius side slayn, it is no faille;  
 Scilla victorious, with marcial apparaille  
 Entryng the toun, ageyn his oth, parde,  
 Thre thousand citeseyns slouh. of the cite. 1208
- Of folk disarmyd & naked in the toun,  
 Thei nouthur spared old nor yong of age,  
 The cruel moordrers walkyng up nor down  
 Be Scilla sent in that mortal rage,  
 Till Catullus, a prince fall in age,  
 Saide vnto Scilla, “we can no difference  
 Atween rebelloun nor atween innocence; 1212
- Sulla massacred  
 the people until  
 an old prince  
 named Catullus
- We moordre & slen withoute excepcioun  
 Both hih & louh, holdyng no maneere;  
 Ageyn al kniethod, to myn oppynyoun,  
 We do proceede in our conquest heere, —  
 Our title is lost the tryumphe to requere  
 Of hih prowess, whan we canat obserue  
 No difference to slen nor [to] reserue.” 1216
- remonstrated  
 with him, say-  
 ing that if  
 they continued  
 thus to slaugh-  
 ter they would  
 have no title of  
 triumph.  
 1220
- And in this while, of hatful cruelte  
 Scilla contreued lettres diffamable,  
 Wherbi fyue hundred out of that cite  
 Wer falsli bashed, citeseyns notable, —  
 Ageyn[e]s hem he was so vntretable, —  
 Alle ther goodes achetid in that rage  
 Of auarice and of fals pillage. 1224
- Sulla also ban-  
 ished 500 not-  
 ables and con-  
 fiscated their  
 goods out of  
 avarice.  
 1228
- 1232

1195. afforn H. 1202. on] vnto J, to P, on in H 5.

1204. was] wer H.

1216. Catallus H.

A brother of Marius hid in a goat-house but was dragged to Catullus's grave.

Another Romeyn namyd Marrius,  
 Brother to Marrius, of whom tofor I tolde,  
 For dreed of Scilla fledde & took an hous  
 Which vnto goot was set up for a foolde; 1236  
 Found & rent out in his daies olde,  
 With cordes drawe (no rescus myhte hym saue)  
 Of cruel vengauce to Catullus graue,

where Sulla commanded his eyes to be torn out, his hands smitten off, and his head to be set on a pole and sent to Marius.

Wher Scilla made bi cruel\* iugement, 1240  
 With a sharp suerd[e], forgid for to bite,  
 Aftir tyme his eien wer out rent,  
 Bothe attonys his handis of to smyte.  
 His hed smet of, no raunsoun myhte hym quite,<sup>r</sup> 1244  
 Set on a pole, it wolde be non othir,  
 And off despiht[e] sent vnto his brothir,

Marius himself was in great danger;

To grete Marius, of whom I spak now riht, —  
 The grete duk, so mihti & so huge, 1248  
 Which hadde afforn[e] tak hym to the fiht  
 For feer of Scilla in that mortal deluge,  
 Into a cite to fynde ther refuge,  
 Callid Preueste, ther stondyng in gret dreed, 1252  
 Namli whan he beheeld his brothris hed.

and when he saw his brother's head he despaired, and drawing a sword bade his servant kill him.

For-asmoch as he no socour fond,  
 Dispeired, this was his purpos:  
 To slen hymself[e] with his owne hond 1256  
 In thilke place wher he was kept[e] cloos.  
 Drouh out a suerd, up anon he roos,  
 Constreynd his seruaunt in that sodeyn affray  
 Smyte off his hed, the silue same day. 1260

Men may see that death is the end of all trouble and adversity. Fortune once more shewed in the case of Marius how she can vary her course.

¶ Men seen how deth is fyn of al myscheeff, [p. 313]  
 Eende off aduersite that doth wrechchis tarie.  
 Fortune heer maketh another preeff  
 In Marrius, how she hir cours can varie, 1264  
 Bi an euidence hatful and contrarie  
 To shewe hir malis and vngoodliheed  
 Ageyn this duk, alas, whan he was ded.

This frowarde\* ladi, of malis most vengable, 1268  
 Whan hir list furiousli to raue  
 And shewe hirsilff[e] cruel & vnstable,

1239. Catallus H. 1240. cruel] gret B.

1268. frowarde] frowardli B.

1269. H repeats here the 2nd line of preceding stanza, but alters last word to rave.



- To non estat she list no reward haue.  
 Causede Marius be take out of his graue 1272  
 Bi cruel Scilla, in stori it is founde,  
 His ougli careyn smet on pecis rounde.  
 And aftir, mor to shewe his cruelte, —  
 Marrius sholde haue no burying place, — 1276  
 Caste his careyn, of kankrid enmyte,  
 Into Tibre, ther was non othir grace.  
 Loo, thus can Fortune for hir folk purchase!  
 Bi which exauple touchyng Marrius, 1280  
 Off worldli chaunges Bochas writeth thus,  
 Maketh in this chapitle a descripsioun,  
 First what thyng is verray gentillesse,  
 To sette a preeff & a probacioun, 1284  
 No thyng atteyneth vnto hih noblesse  
 But the cleer shynyng of vertuous clennessse,  
 Which may nat shewe, in lough nor hih\* parage,  
 But wher it groweth out of a peur corage. 1288  
 Worldli poweer, oppressioun, tyrannye,  
 Erthli tresour, gold, stonis nor richesse  
 Be no menys vnto gent[e]rie,  
 But-yif vertu reule ther hih prowessse: 1292  
 For wher vices haue any interesse  
 In hih[e] berthe, mene, or lough kynreede,  
 Deeme no man gentil, but onli bi his deede.  
 In roial paleisis of ston & metal wrouht, 1296  
 With galleries or statli cloistres rounde,  
 Gentillesse or noblesse is nat souht,  
 Nor in cileris nor in voutis rounde;  
 But onli ther wher vertu doth habounde: 1300  
 Corious clothes nor gret pocessiouns  
 Maketh nat men gentil but condic[i]ouns.  
 Philisophres conclude\* in ther entent  
 And alle thes worthi famous old auctours, 1304  
 No man may quethe in his testament  
 Gentillesse vnto his successours;  
 Of wikked weed[e] come non holsum flours.  
 Concludyng thus: of good[e] men & shrewes, 1308  
 Calle ech man gentil aftir his good[e] thewes.

After his  
 burial, Sulla  
 had his body  
 dug up again,  
 and his ugly  
 corpse cut into  
 round pieces  
 and cast into  
 the Tiber.  
 Thus Fortune  
 rewards her  
 folk!

Bochas says  
 that nothing  
 attains to high  
 noblesse except  
 the clear  
 shining of  
 virtue, that can  
 spring only  
 from a pure  
 heart.

Worldly power,  
 tyranny, and  
 wealth are no  
 means to  
 gentility unless  
 they are ruled  
 by virtue.

No man is  
 gentle except  
 by his deeds;

and gentility  
 cannot be de-  
 vised by  
 testament to  
 our successors.  
 Wholesome  
 flowers do not  
 grow on weeds.

1274. on] in H. 1282. chapter H 5, Chapter P.  
 1283. gentillesse H. 1287. hih nor lough B, P.  
 1292. hih] his H. 1293. haue] hath H. 1299. Sileers H.  
 1303. concluden B. 1305. questh H.

- Duke Marrius,  
born of poor  
parents, was a  
man of enter-  
prising ability,  
but his heart  
was unsteady  
by the storm  
of avarice.
- Duk Marrius, of whom I spak toforn,  
Of nature, the stori berth wittesse,  
As\* be discent [both] poore and nedi born, 1312  
Bi disposicioun of coraious noblesse,  
Hadde in his persooone wit, strengthe [&] hardynesse;  
Vndir al this, ther dide his herte myne  
A werm of auarice his worshep to declyne. 1316
- What avaris  
plente that can  
saver without?  
The ruler of  
Tantalus cannot  
womage the  
thirst of greed.
- What uaiileth plente, that neuer may suffice?  
Or what the flood, that staunche may no thrust?  
Or what an appetit, that cuer doth arise,  
Alwey to ete, and cuer to ete hath lust? 1320  
Of kankrid hunger so fretyng is the rust,  
That the ryueer of Tantalus in his rage  
Of gredi etikes the fret may nat asswage.
- You have heard  
the end of  
Marius.  
Three Cleo-  
patras next  
appeared before  
Bochas, with  
woeful downcast  
looks.
- ¶ Of Marrius ye han herd the cende, 1324  
His woful fall & his vnhappi caas,  
Into fate how he dede weende.  
Now wil I folwe myn auctour Iohn Bochas,  
How onto hym thre Cleopatras, 1328  
With look[e] down cast, woful face & cheere,  
Alle attonys to hym dide appeere.
- The first of  
them had had  
three husbands,  
of whom the  
last was An-  
tiochus;
- The firste of hem, bi processe of writyng,  
Hadde thre husbondis, Bochas doth expresse: 1332  
Weddid in youthe to Alisaundre the kyng  
Callid Zebenna, a prince\* of gret noblesse;  
Aftir that for hir gret fairnesse  
She weddid was vnto Demetrius, 1336  
And laste of all to kyng Anthiochus.
- and as Bochas  
has already  
written their  
unfortunate  
fate and her  
son's great un-  
kindness, it  
were idle to  
rehearse it all  
again.
- Of hir thre husbondis woful auenture  
And of hir sonis gret vnkyndenesse,  
Bochas afforn hath doon his besi cure 1340  
Ceriousli the maner to expresse,  
Which to rehearse ageyn wer idilnesse,  
Sith al the processe heer-toforn is founde  
Of the firste & eek of the secounde, 1344
- The second  
Cleopatra was  
wedded to  
Pentemy Euer-  
getes, who  
serued her son  
up to her at  
table.
- Which weddid was to kyng Tholome, [p. 314]  
Lik as toforn is maad eek menciou  
Bothe of ther ioie & ther aduersite.  
The firste slayn be drynkyng of poisoun, 1348

1312. As] Al B, &amp; H, And R 3 — both] om. J, H 5.

1317. availith H. 1319. which nevir doth rise H.

1334. prince] princesse B.

And the secounde, to hir confusioun,  
Bi Euergetes, wher she wer wo or fayn,  
Was with hir child[e] seruid, that was slayn.

The thridde weddid was to kyng Grispus, 1352 The third  
Slayn in a temple bi ful gret outrage, married King  
For dreed & shame gan wexe furious, Grypus; and  
To saue hirsilff[e] knew non auantage, she was slain  
Saue she enbracid of Iubiter an image, 1356 in a temple.  
In the stori as heer-tofforn is founde,  
Or she was ded suffred many a wounde.

[How kyng Mitridate bood vij. yere in wilderness  
had grete tormentys bothe in see & londe, by  
his blood brouht to vttraunce slouh himsilf with  
a swerde.]<sup>1</sup>

**I**WIL passe ouer thes Cleopatras thre,  
Foordth procede to the hasti fate 1360 Duke Mithri-  
Soone execut bi Parchas cruelte dates was  
Vpon the duk callid Mitridate. in his young  
First reherse the grete vnkyndli hate days nearly  
Of them that wern his tutours, as I reede, destroyed by  
Hym to destroie bassent of his kynreede. 1364 his tutors,  
who, seeking his  
death,  
Which of purpos dide his deth prouide made him  
Bi many vnkouth straunge occasioun: ride a wild  
In tendre youth[e] first thei made hym ride 1368 horse.  
Vpon an hors wildere than [a] leoun,  
Off purpos onli for his destruccioun.  
But al-be-so that he was yong of age, 1372  
The hors he reuled in al his moste rage.  
Nat of doctryne, but onli of nature  
He was disposid kon[n]yngli to ride,  
Ouer hym the maistri to recure, 1376  
Maugre the hors, of wit he was his guide.  
What weye he took[e], froward or a-side,  
He dauntede hym, that wher-so-euer he rood  
Bridled hym & on his bak abood.  
His owne kyn & his next allies 1380 His own kin  
Most laboured to brynge hym to myscheeff, tried to poison  
With venymous drynk set on hym espies him,

1362. duke] king P.

1369. a] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 128 recto.

At good leiseer, as dooth a couert theeff,  
Of ther fell poisoun for to make a preeff, 1384  
In ther entent, the stori is weel kouth,  
Hym to moordre in his tendre youth.

and for self-protection, he provided himself with all manner of notable antidotes.

But whan that he apparceyued ther tresoun,  
To saue hymself[e] made gret ordenaunce; 1388  
Anon as he gan haue suspecioun  
Of the[r] vnkyndli hatful purueyaunce,  
For remedies made cheuisaunce:  
Was prouided ther malis to declyne, 1392  
Be many notable preeued medecyne.

To avoid his enemies he withdrew from his country and hunted wild beasts

And ther malis prudentli teschewe,  
Is remembred, whil he was yong of age,  
With certeyn freendes, which that dede hym sue, 1396  
He disposed of custum his corage  
To hunte & chase beestis most sauage;  
Vndir that colour he dede it for a wile,  
Ferr from his contre absente hym for a while. 1400

and lodged in caves and hollow trees among high hills in the wilderness for seven years.

Of o corage, of oon hert & o cheer  
Suffred manli, took non heuynesse,  
In desertis space of seuene yeer,  
Among hih hilles abood in wildirnesse. 1404  
Set in Asia, the stori berth witenesse,  
Fond no loggyng, tracyng the contres,  
Sauue in kauernys & in holwe trees.

He lived on the beasts he slew, slept little and avoided idleness,

The book remembreth how that his diete 1408  
Wer beestis wilde enchacid with gret miht,  
Fledde idilnesse, eschewed al quiete,  
And litil sleep suffised hym at niht;  
Bexercice his bodi was maad liht: 1412  
Ther was nouthur, whan hym list pursue,  
Hert nor hynde that miht his hand eschewe.

and was so swift and strong that no animal could escape him.

He nouthur dradde tiges nor leouns;  
He was so swifft, thouth thei dede hym assaile, — 1416  
Lik of strengthe to olde champiouns,  
No wilde beeste of gret nor smal entaille  
Tescape his hand[e] myht nat countiruaile  
Yif he wer war[e], erli outhur late, 1420  
So gret[e] swifftnesse hadde Mitridate.

- Among he hadde in armys excersise,  
 Among to tourneye & renne on hors[e]bak;  
 Al delicat fare he dede also despise,  
 1424 Of gredi excesse; in hym ther was no lak:  
 A-nihter-tyme his slep ful ofte he brak,  
 Stoundemeel the hour[e]s for to marke;  
 In the dawenyng roos up or the larke. 1428
- The space accomplisshid fulli of seuene yeer, [p. 3] 145] At the end of  
 He is repeired hom to his contre;  
 Shewed hymself of manhod and of cheer  
 Ful lik a kniht, his stori who list see. 1432  
 Wherof his enmyes sore astoned bee;  
 Kauhte of his comyng in herte a maner dreed,  
 Supposyng afforn that he was ded.
- In whos absence his wiff Leodices  
 1436 Conceyued a childe; as maad is mencion.  
 For the diffame sholde nat kome in pres,  
 Hym for to moordre she souhte occasioun,  
 Fulli in purpos to slen hym be poisoun.  
 1440 Of which diffautis hir lord was nothyng fayn,  
 Knowyng the trouthe, made hir to be slayn.
- Took on hym aftir many knihtli deede:  
 First to conquere al Pafflagonye  
 1444 Bi the helpe of worthi Nychomeede,  
 That tyme callid kyng of Bithynye,  
 Togidre assurid to been of allie  
 In losse or lucre, Fortune to be ther guide, 1448  
 And therto swor[e]n neuer to deuyde.
- To Mitridate legat<sup>es</sup> wer doun sent  
 From the Romeyns, hym lowli requeryng,  
 That he wolde, lik to ther entent,  
 1452 Pafflagonie restore vnto ther kyng,  
 Which he hadde wonne, the cite assailyng.  
 But he list nat aduertise ther praieere,  
 Nor on no parti ther requestis heere. 1456
- He dradde nat ther thretis nor manacis,  
 Gat proudli after the lond of Galathie,  
 In his conquest<sup>es</sup> wan\* many othir placis,  
 1460 Capadoce took to his partie,

He was a good  
 joustier and  
 rider and  
 despised luxury.

At the end of  
 the seven years  
 he went home  
 and was feared  
 by all his  
 enemies.

During his ab-  
 sence his wife  
 had a child,  
 and to hide  
 her shame  
 sought to  
 poison him, for  
 which he caused  
 her to be slain.

He conquered  
 Paphlagonia  
 with the help  
 of Nicomedes,

and afterwards  
 was required by  
 the Romans to  
 restore the  
 kingdom. This  
 he refused  
 to do.

He had no  
 fear of them,  
 and soon con-  
 quered Galatia  
 and Cappadocia.

1426. full offt his sleep H.

1435. that] trowid þæt H.

1459. wan] gat B.

Slouh ther kyng, of hatrede & envie,  
Ariaractes, a ful manli man;  
And in this wise his conquest he began.

He then fell  
out with Nico-  
medes, who  
took the crown  
of Cappadocia,  
without Mithri-  
dates' consent,

Ageyn thassuraunce tween hym & Nichomeede, 1464  
Alle sodenli he gan falle at debat;  
Thouhte he wolde werreie hym in deede,  
Because that he, pompous & elat,  
In Capadoce took on hym the estat 1468  
To regne as kyng, ageyn[e]s his entent,  
He nouthur beyng of counsail nor assent.

although he  
had married his  
sister.

Yit Nichomeede, or thei gan debate,  
Hadde long afforn[e] to his owne ences 1472  
The sustir weddid of this Mitridate,  
Whan thei as brethre lived in rest and pes.\*  
And she was also callid Leodices,  
Hauyng too sonys born for to succeede 1476  
Afftir disses of seid[e] Nichomeede.

After Nico-  
medes' death he  
deprived his  
two sons of the  
kingdom

But bi processe thes said[e] childre tweyne  
In Capadoce, bi help of Mitridate,  
Cleymed a title, iustli for tatteyne 1480  
Vnto the crowne, ther fadir ded but late.  
For which thei gan felli to debate,  
Til Mitridate falsli gan contryue  
His too neuews vngoodli to depryue. 1484

and had his  
own son  
crowned there.  
The Romans  
sent down  
Ariobazanes  
to chase him  
out, but Mith-  
ridates allied  
himself with  
Tigranes and  
was victorious,

Al Capadoce he took into his hand,  
His owne sone he hath ther crowned kyng.  
Capadociens, bassent of al the lond,  
Gan disobeie of purpos his werkyng. 1488  
Whan the Romeyns considered al thys thing,  
Ariobarzanes in haste thei sente down  
Geyn Mitridate to keep that regioun.

The sone of whom fro them thei ha[n] refusid, 1492  
Out of ther kyngdam gan hym to enchase;  
For thei sempte ther franchise was abusid,  
To seen a foreyn occupie that place.  
Mitridate gan newli hem manace, 1496  
And took with hym to susteene his partie  
Tigranes the kyng of Armenye.

1462. Arriarattes H, Ariarectes J, Ariarathes P.  
1474. lived in rest and pes] list to leue in pes B.  
1493. hym to] them H.

- Ariobarzanes, that was fro Roome sent  
 To Capadoce to helpe hem & counsaile, 1500  
 Of Mitridate knowyng the entent,  
 How he cam down proudli hym tassaille  
 With Tigranes set in the ferst bataille,  
 Of Capadoce that al the regioun 1504  
 Was brouht that day to ther subieccioun.  
 Thus Mitridate hauyng his entent,  
 In short tyme contrees conqueryng,  
 Was myhtiest prince of al the orient, 1508  
 And in tho daies oon the grettest kyng.  
 And as it is remembred be writyng,  
 He delitid most in astronomye,  
 In sortilege & in sorcerye. 1512  
 And with al these, he dede his besi cure  
 For to lerne vnkouth conclusiouns [p. 316] and in abstruse  
 And secretes souht out bi nature, problems, and  
 Knew the langage of dyuers regiouns, knew 22 differ-  
 Of too and twenty sondri naciouns, ent languages.  
 And heeld[e] women many mo than oon, He had many  
 Loued Hipsicrata aboue hem euerichon. 1516 wives, but loved  
 To the Romeyns this manli Mitridate, Hipsicratia  
 As bookis olde recorde of hym & seyn, best. 1520  
 Vpon a day, of verray cruel hate  
 Thoruh al Asie he bad that ech Romeyn  
 Sholde of his men merciles be slayn: 1524  
 Twenti thousand he slouh eek on o day  
 Of Romeyn marchauntes, ther durst no man sei nay.  
 To hym he drouh dyuers naciouns  
 To encrece\* his parti bi puissaunce, 1528  
 Kymbrois, Gallois, with othir regiouns,  
 Bastornois took to his alliaunce;  
 With straunge peepel made his aqueyntaunce  
 Wher that euer he rood nyh or ferre, 1532  
 With them of Roome for to holde werre.\*  
 In Grece also he gat many an ile,  
 Al Ciclades to his subieccioun;  
 Conquered so, that withynne a while  
 Of Athenes he gat the famous toun. 1536  
 But whan Romeyns knew his entencioun,  
 Thei sente Scilla in a furious heete  
 With Mitridate in Grece for to meete. 1540

1525. o] a H. 1528. Tencrece B. 1533. a werre B.

and, defeating  
his general  
Archelaus,

Archelaus, which that was constable,  
Leedyng the host of kyng Mitridate,  
Gan ageyn Scilla, trustyng he was able,  
Maugre Romeynes\* with hym to debate. 1544  
As thei mette in ther furious hate,  
Beside Ortonia of Grece a gret[e] toun,  
Of Archelaus the parti was born doun.

conquered Ephe-  
sus, Cappadocia  
and Bithynia.

Ther gan Scilla to been victorious 1548  
Geyn Mitridate, & be gret violence  
Gat al Ephese, a kyngdam ful famous,  
Rood thoruh Asie, fond no resistence;  
Bi his kniithod & manli prouidence 1552  
Capadoce, Bithynye eek also  
To Romeyn handis he gat hem bothe too.

At this, Mithri-  
dates hastened  
to make peace,  
hoping to suc-  
ceed better  
later.

Whan Mitridate parceyued hath this thyng,  
How the conquest of Scilla took encrees, 1556  
Anon he caste withoute long tarieng,  
For a tyme with hym to haue a pes.  
Of hih[e] wisdam he was nat rek[e]les  
To dissymule til\* he fond tyme & space 1560  
In Fortune to fynde better grace.

On Sulla's re-  
turn to Rome,

Abood his tyme, kept hym silue cloos  
Til he fond leiseer lik his oppynyoun.  
In this while of aenture aroos 1564  
Withynne Roome a gret discencioun  
Tween too consuleris beyng in that toun,  
Which tappese bi his auctorite  
Scilla cam up ageyn to the cite. 1568

Mithridates  
collected an  
army and laid  
siege to  
Cyzicus, the  
greatest city of  
Asia,

Whan Mitridate his absence dede espie,  
To his purpos fond oportunyte,  
Gadred people, & with his cheualrie  
A siege leid to Cizite the cite, 1572  
Of al Asie most off auctorite.  
Til Lucullus, a myhti consuleer,  
To breke the seege aproche gan ful neer.

but was at-  
tacked by  
Lucullus, who

Mitridate hadde on fyue capteyns 1576  
Tofor the toun made a disconfiture,  
Of hih despiht he hadde to Romeyns.  
But Lucullus the damage to recure,

1544. Romeynes] with Romeyns B. 1552. &] of H.  
1555. hath] om. H. 1557. long] om. H.  
1560. til] whan B. 1566. that] þe H, R 3.



- Tenclose ther enmyes dide his\* besi cure: 1580  
 To his mynours gaf anon in charge  
 Aboute the siege to make a dich ful large.
- Thei withynne hadde knowlechyng  
 Be certeyn toknys of al *per* gouernaunce; 1584  
 Wherupon thei made no taryeng  
 To caste a weie for ther deliuerance.  
 Mithridates seying ther ordenaunce,  
 Of hih prudenc<sup>e</sup> scaped away beside, 1588  
 And at the seege no lenger list abide.
- Lucullus than, the myhti consuleer,  
 Pursued aftir, slouh of his meyne  
 Swich multitude, that Asapus the ryueer 1592  
 Was maad with blood[e] lik the Rede Se.  
 With wynd & tempest fordryue also was he,  
 And whan he sauh no socour on the lond,  
 To shipp he wente with strong & myhti hond. 1596
- He fond Fortune cruel aduersarie [p. 317] Fortune was  
 On lond & se, this worthi Mithridate; contrary to  
 And Neptunus made the se contrarie, Mithridates  
 Ageyn[e]s hym his puissaunce to abate. and threw him  
 What shal men calle it? — influence or fate? — down from his  
 So sodenli a prince of hih renoun high estate.  
 From hih noblesse to be plongid down. 1600
- For any myscheeff he kept ay o visage, 1604 Nevertheless he  
 This Mithridate, & loth was for to plie did not lose  
 Or for to bowe, so strong was his corage, courage, and  
 But efft ageyn goth with his cheualrie once more gave  
 Toward Adrastus, an hill of Armenye, battle to his  
 Where-as Pompeie besette hym envirooun, enemies in  
 Sent fro Roome to his destruccioun. Armenia. 1608
- Mithridate making his logging place  
 Vndir that hill, whan it drouh to niht, 1612 The sky was  
 The troubli heuene with thundryng gan manace; troubled  
 The firy leuene dirkid hath his siht; with thunder  
 The cloudi moone clipped of hir liht, and fery  
 Astoned hym bi vnwar violence, lightning, and  
 That he stood confus of al prouidence. the moon  
 eclipsed. 1616

1580. his] ther B. 1582. the] his H. 1587. Mithridate H.  
 1592. Asopus H, J, P, R 3.  
 1608. Armony H.

- He grew almost weary of life; but his faithful wife never once left him and followed him wherever he went, disguised as a page.
- He was be tempest & vnwar dirknesse  
Almost maad wery of his woful liff;  
Yit I fynde, of verray kyndenesse, 1620  
Hipsicrata, which that was his wiff,  
Nouthur for werre nor no mortal stryff  
Left hym neuere: disgised of visage  
Folwed hym arraied as a page. 1624
- Yet even when Fortune was most menacing, his courage did not fail him.
- Yit in his moste mortal heuynesse,  
Whan cloudi Fortune gan hym most manace,  
Of his corage the naturel quiknesse 1628  
Appalled nat nor remeued from his place,  
So hih prowesse dide his hert embrace.  
Nat dispeired for no sodeyn fall,  
Of condiciouns he was so marciall.
- He shewed no sign of weakness, although there was the greatest occasion for despair.
- In tokne wherof, he stondyng at myscheeff,  
Chaunged nouthur cheer nor contenance:  
An euidence & a ful gret preeff 1632  
Of manli force and hertli assurauce.  
Deffying Fortune, with al hir variaunce, 1636  
Whan that he fond to his destruccioun  
Of dispeir grettest occasioun.
- With him was a bailiff named Castor, who traitorously sent his master's children as hostages to Rome,
- With hym he hadde a bailiff, as I fynde,  
Callid Castor, which of condicioun 1640  
Was to his lord[e] fals & eek vnkynde,  
And conspired ageyn hym fals tresoun.  
In tokne wherof, up to Roome toun 1644  
His lordis childre, yong & tendre of age,  
Lik a fals theeff he sent hem in hostage.
- and murdered one of his sons. Another son, Pharnaces, was ungrateful
- Oon of his sones he moordred be tresoun,  
Which Mitridate took ful sore at herte. 1648  
Another sone, as maad is menciuon,  
Fals to his fader, which whan he dide aduerte,  
The vnkyndnesse made hym sore smerte;  
For of al vicis, shortli to conclude,  
Werst of alle is ingratitude. 1652
- and disloyal, and, taking possession of the army,
- This same child, of whom I make mynde,  
Callid Pharnax, which ageyn nature  
To his fadir tretour & vnkynde, — 1656  
And his purpos ageyn hym to recure  
In al hast[e] dede his besi cure;  
For tacomplisshe his purpos in partie,  
Took to hym hool his fadris cheualrie.

- Be sleihte & meede whan he was maad[e] strong, 1660 laid siege to  
 He beseged his fadir round aboute, — his father  
 Vnto nature, me seemeth, he dide wrong (which, it  
 To putte his fadir in so gret a doute. seems to me,  
 Kyndenesse was ferr shet withoute, 1664 was wrong),  
 Whan the sone, with hate set affire,  
 Ageyns his fadir list falsli to conspire.  
 With multitude his fadir was constreyned,  
 Mauge his myht, into a tour to flee, 1668 and compelled  
 His sone vnkynde hath at hym disdeyned; him to seek  
 And yit for al his straunge aduersite, refuge in a  
 Of his corage the magnanymyte tower.  
 In his persone stood hool, list nat varie, 1672  
 Thouh Fortune was to hym contrarie.  
 Yit myn auctour Bochas berth record,  
 That Mitridate, yif it wolde haue bee,  
 Requered his sone to been at accord 1676 Although he  
 And set aside al old contrariouste. bade his son  
 But he vnkynde, was indurat parde, make peace  
 Euere froward, malicious of corage, with him, the  
 So disposed from his tendre age. 1680 son was ob-  
 So that the kyng Mitridate, alas, [p. 318] durate;  
 Was ouercome be vnkyndenesse, and Mithri-  
 That neuer afforn[e] in no maner caas dates, who  
 Stood disamaied, but of hih prowess never before  
 Kept ay o face al passiouns to represe. 1684 had lost heart,  
 This vertu force, bi marcial doctryne, was overcome  
 For non aduersite suffrid\* hym declyne. by unkindness.  
 Eende of his werris & his mortal stryues, 1688 He slew his  
 Of his debatis and discenciouns, wives and  
 His concubynes, his douhtres & his wyues, daughters and  
 Be mene onli of certeyn pocious, concubines by  
 Slouh hem alle be drynkyng of poisouns; giving them  
 For he nat wolde, the cause to descryue, 1692 poison,  
 Aftir his deth thei sholde abide alyue.  
 His owne deth, of mortal fel rigour  
 Compassed afforn[e], thus he gan devise:  
 Made a Frensh kniht that was a soudiour, 1696 and made a  
 With a sharp suerd in ful cruel wise Gallic knight  
 To renne hym thoruh; wherbi the fraunchise run him through  
 Conserued was his purpos to fulfill, with a sharp  
 He shold nat deie but bi his owne will. 1700 sword.

This was the end of Mithridates. Let all princes take heed of his death.

Loo, heer the eende of kyng Mitridate!  
 Lat princis alle of his deth take heede,  
 How reklesli he passed into fate 1704  
 And bi assent made his herte bleede.  
 And Bochas heer, who list his book to reede,  
 Pleykli rehersyng but in woordes fewe,  
 To worldli princis doth his conceit shewe. 1708

### Lenvoye.

Mighty Princes, compare in your minds the concord and gladness of heaven and the worldly changes of Fortune.

**M**YHTI Princis, lefft up your corages,  
 Toward heuene doth your hertes dresse,  
 Of your memorie \* tourne up þe visages,  
 Wher ioie is euere, concord and gladnesse, 1712  
 Trewe armony, celestial suetnesse, —  
 Countirpeiseth in your remembraunce  
 Worldli chaungis, Fortunys variaunce.

Think of the outrage of war, slaughter, murder, division, deceit, brought about through a sudden change of worldly variance.

Aduertiseth the mortal fel outrages 1716  
 Of blodi werris impossible to represse,  
 Whil fals envie with his furious rages  
 In sondry rewmys hath so gret interesse, —  
 Slaughtre, moordre, deuisioun, falsnesse, 1720  
 Which conscience haue brouht[e] to vttraunce  
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Reckon up the princes, who sat on high thrones, and their end, and the bloody wages of tyrants.

Rekne up princis that sat on hih[e] stages:  
 What was the fyn of ther roial noblesse? 1724  
 Or of tirauntis rekne up the bloodi wages:  
 Sodeyn slaughtre guerdouned ther woodnesse.  
 Mitridate can bern herof witsnesse,  
 Bi blood vnkynde brouht vnto vttraunce, 1728  
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Remember the Golden Age, when Saturn ruled, and the silver world of Jupiter, and the fierce world made steel by Mars.

Princis remembreth vpon the goldene ages,  
 Whan Satourn reuled the world in rihtwisnesse;  
 Next Iubiter, for peeplis auantages, 1732  
 In siluiren world conserued in clenness,  
 Which Mars hath now tournid to felnesse,  
 Made it stelene, with suerd, dagger & launce,  
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce. 1736

1711. memorie] memoire B, J.

1716. the] their H — outrages] Coragis H.

- Of Mitridate registreth the viages,  
 Conspired poisouns taffraie his hih prowesse,  
 On lond and se tempestuous passages,  
 Bi constreynt bood seuene yeer in wildirnesse. 1740  
 Of his wandryng peiseth thunsekirnesse,  
 His eende in myscheef, knew non auoidaunce  
 Geyn worldli chaung nor Fortunys variaunce.
- Yif necligence haue brouht you in rerages 1744  
 Towardis God, or he rekne in streihtnesse,  
 Lat resoun medle for you to leyn hostages, —  
 Compassioun, merci, partyng of almesse,  
 Toward heuene to supporte your feeblesse, 1748  
 Whan your meritis shal peisen in ballaunce  
 Of worldli chaungis & Fortunys variaunce.
- Deth spareth\* nouthur hih blood nor hih lynages, 1752  
 Hath mynde heeron for any reklesnesse;  
 Transitoire been heer your pilgrymages,  
 Set with brigauntis vnwarli you toppresse,  
 But-yif prudence bi gret auysenesse  
 With prouidence preserue your puissaunce 1756  
 Geyn worldli chaung & Fortunys variaunce.
- Remember the warlike enter-  
 prises and  
 insecure life of  
 Mithridates,  
 who could not  
 avoid the vari-  
 ance of Fortune.
- If you have  
 been negligent  
 towards God,  
 let reason help  
 you to lay  
 compassion,  
 charity and  
 mercy as  
 hostages in  
 heaven.
- Death spares  
 no man, but  
 prudence may  
 preserve you  
 against worldly  
 change.

[How Eucratides kyng of Sithie was slayn bi Demetrius, and after his careyn cast to houndys.]<sup>1</sup>

- N**EXT in ordre to Bochas dide appeere  
 A woful prince, which put himsilf in pres,  
 Regnyng in Sithia, his stori doþ us lere, 1760  
 The name of whom was Eucratides.  
 But to disturbe his quiete & his pes,  
 Ageyn[e]s hym, pleyntli, as I fynde,  
 Cam Demetrius the myhti\* kyng of Ynde. 1764
- Of whom the poweer & the violence [p. 319]  
 To Eucratides was verray importable:  
 Beseegid first, and for lak of diffence  
 Take at myscheef, his foon nat merciabe; 1768  
 For Demetrius was on hym so vengable,  
 Whan he was slayn withynne his owne boundis,  
 Made the careyn [to] be caste out to\* houndis.
- A woful prince,  
 Eucratides of  
 Scythia, next  
 appeared before  
 Bochas.
- He was be-  
 sieged by De-  
 metrius, king  
 of India, and  
 finally captured  
 and slain,

1738. hih] *om.* H. 1751. spareth] spared B — lynage J.  
 1760. Sithia] Bactris P. 1764. myhti] worthy B.  
 1771. to] *om.* J, H 5 — out to] vnto B, out to the J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

and his body  
thrown to the  
dogs, although  
he was a  
worthy king.  
I will not  
dwell any  
longer on such  
a hateful story.

Natwithstandyng he was a worthi kyng, 1772  
Born of hih blood, swich was his auenture.  
Demetrius sone aboue al erthli thyng  
Hatede hym, bi record of scripture,  
Of rancour denied his sepulture. 1776  
And for the mateer is hatful & contrarie,  
On his stori I wil no lenger tarie.

[How herodes kyng of Parthos, werred with Romayns  
whiche aftir his sone & heir was slayn / made  
his bastard son kyng þat anon aftir slouh his  
fadir.]<sup>1</sup>

Artabanus,  
king of Parthia,  
had two sons,  
Mithridates and  
Orodes,

**T**O Arthabanus whilom of Parthos king  
I purpose my stile to transporte, 1780  
A ful olde prince, had in his luyung  
Sonys tweyne, bookis so reporte,  
Which in his age dide hym most counfort:  
Mitridate was the elder\* brothir, 1784  
And Herodes callid was the tothir.

and when he  
died was suc-  
ceeded by  
Mithridates,  
the elder, who  
was a tyrant  
and, banished,  
fled to  
Babylon.

Mitridate, be resoun of his age,  
His fadir ded, dide aftir hym succede,  
Which bashed was for tirannye & outrage. 1788  
Aftirward for myscheeff & for neede  
Into Babiloun he took his fliht for dreede.  
The peepel anon, after his partyng,  
Of indignacioun made his brothir kyng. 1792

Orodes then  
became king,  
and, taking  
Babylon,  
caused his  
brother's head  
to be cut off.

Thus kam Herodes to estat roiall,  
Pursuede his brothir into Babiloun,  
Leide a seege round aboute the wall;  
Thei to hym yold[e] up the toun. 1796  
Thus was his brothir brouht to confusioun, —  
Afforn the castel, withoute lenger date,  
Made smyte of the hed of Mitridate.

Afterwards he  
made war on  
Rome.  
Crassus, who  
came down  
against him,

In Parthos aftir he took pecessioun, 1800  
This yonge Herodes, of volunte & pride  
Gan a werre geyn\* hem of Roome toun,  
Whom to withstonde thei list nat longe abide.

1784. elder] eldest B.

1785. Herodes] Orodes P.

1802. geyn] ageyn B, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

- The consul Crassus kam down on ther side, 1804  
 Comaundid was short processe to make,  
 Toward Parthos his viage for to take.
- Crassus list nat tentren in that rewm, first went to  
 Lefte Parthos, the stori doth deuisse, — 1808 Jerusalem to  
 Took his weie toward Iherusalem rob the temple,  
 To take ther a solempne enprise,  
 In the temple, onli of couetise,  
 Took ther, ageyn the title of rihtwisnesse, 1812  
 Vp al ther tresour & ther gret richesse.
- Bi which he gat in dyuers regiouns and then gave  
 Gret multitude to holde up his partie, battle to Orodes  
 Ladde with hym elleuene legiouns, with eleuen  
 Toward Parthos faste gan hym hie, 1816 legions.
- Bi his lettres proudli gan defie  
 The said Herodes, and with gret apparaille  
 Mid his contre proffred hym bataille. 1820
- The nexte morwe whan Crassus took þe feeld,  
 To hym was brouht of blak a cotearmure,  
 Which whan his knihtes auysili beheeld, He wore a suit  
 Dempte it a tokne of disconfiture; 1824 of black ar-  
 For in contrarie\* Romeyns do ther cure, mour, which  
 Whan ther capteyn shal fihten, or ther hed, his knights  
 His cotearmure is owther whit or red. considered  
 bad luck;
- A-nother tokne froward to beholde, 1828 and when one of  
 The firste egle bete in his baner, was unfolded,  
 Also soone as men it dide vnfolde the eagle  
 Contrariouusli he tournid look & cheer, turned his back  
 The bak to Crassus, folk sauh that stood[e] neer: 1832 on him.
- A pronostik to Romeyns ful certeyn,  
 How Fortune that day was hem ageyn.
- Bi the flood passyng of Eufrates, His standards  
 With vnwar tempest his standardis euerichon 1836 were blown into  
 Into the ryuer wer cast among the pres, the Eufrates  
 To rekne hem all, vpriht stood nat oon. by a sudden  
 Wherof astoned, thei wolde no ferther gon, tempest, and  
 Thes pronostiques made hem so affraied, the army was  
 Lik men in herte dispeired & dismaied. 1840 dismayed and  
 refused to  
 advance.

1806. Parthia P.

1810. emprise J, H, P. 1817. Parthia P.

1823. beheeld] tooke heede H. 1825. contraire B, J.

1836. tempestis H.

- But Crassus was heedless of these tokens and crossed the Euphrates out of covetousness, so that he might despoil Parthia.
- Of the toknys Crassus was rek[e]les,  
The pronostikes he dede also despise,  
Took upon [hym] to passen Eufrates, 1844  
Tentre Parthos onli for couetise.  
To whom Herodes sendith in this wise,  
That his comyng was mor for pillage  
Than for knihthod, manhod or corage. 1848
- All the power of the country came down against him; his son was slain and he himself taken prisoner.
- Al the poweer of Parthos tho kam doun [p. 320]  
With many prefect in that mortal rage  
Ageyn Crassus and them of Roome toun,  
Which, as I tolde, abood on ther pillage, 1852  
That turnid aftir to ther gret damage:  
The sone of Crassus slayn in that affray,  
His fadir take, & al upon o day.
- His head was cut off; and Orodes commanded it to be poured full of molten gold.
- His hed smet of, in whom was no diffence, 1856  
And discourfited with many legioun,  
The hed of Crassus brouht to the presence  
Of Herodes withynne his roial toun,  
Which hath comaundid gold to be brouht doun, 1860  
To be molte ther as he lay ded,  
And to poure therof ful his hed.
- This was done because no amount of gold or treasure could staunch his thirst of covetousness.
- This thyng was doon for a moquerye,  
In signe onli, the stori doth deuise, 1864  
That gold nor tresour, upon no partie,  
Staunche myht his thrust of couetise.  
Such gredynesse ech man owith despise;  
For auarice of custum in ech place 1868  
Of hih prowesse doth the pris difface.
- Orodes then took all of Crassus' pennons and standards and hung them up in his temples as trophies of victory.
- Herodes aftir did serche al the wardis  
Thoruh al the feeld[e] upon Crassus side,  
Took the penouns, baneres & standardis, 1872  
And in his templis, large, longe & wide  
Leet hang hem up of surquedie & pride,  
In signe onli, and eek for a memorie,  
He of Romeyns hath get[e] the victorie. 1876

1849. Parthia P.

1850. in that mortal rage] & mych gret Costage H, & many gret costage R 3, & much great costage P, and many gret constable J, H 5.

1852. as] om. H — ther] þe H. 1865. tresour] siluer H.

1867. owith] doth H, should P.

1870. serche] sechen H.



With whiche he list nat onli be content,  
 Weenyng his fortune sholde abide stable,  
 Into Surrye he hath his sone sent,  
 Callid Pachorus, made hym a constable,  
 Of that regioun with hym to be partable  
 Of al tresours & meobles that he fond,  
 Wher-euer he rood thoruhout al the\* lond.

1880 Not content with all this, and believing that his fortune would continue stable, he sent his son Pacorus to Syria and made him constable there.

Thus Pachorus bi his cheualrie  
 Encrese gan in his tendre age,  
 Wherof Herodes, his fader, had envye,  
 Feerful it sholde turne to his damage,  
 List he wolde be tittle of heritage,  
 Maugre hym, at his ageyn komyng  
 Take upon hym in Parthos to be kyng.

1884 Afterwards, fearing that he should become too powerful, he recalled him.

Than Pachorus was callid hom ageyn,  
 And of Surrie, wher in conclusioun,  
 Al that he had wrouht[e] was in veyn,  
 Because oon Cassius fro Roome was come doun, —  
 Slouh al the peple in that regeoun  
 Which apartened to Pachorus, as I fynde,  
 Withoute capteyn for thei wer left behynde.

1888

1892 During Pacorus' absence Cassius came down from Rome and slew all the people in Syria,

1896

To withstonde this Romeyn Cassius  
 Herodes hath his sone sent ageyn,  
 Which anon aftir, the stori tellith thus,  
 Amyd the feeld vnhappili was slayn.  
 To truste Fortune it is a thyng but vayn,  
 Which of custum to-day is fauourable,  
 And to-morwe gerissli chaungable.

1900 and so Orodes sent him back again to defend his country; but he was slain.

1904

Of Pachorus deth whan the noise aroos  
 And the distrussyng of his cheualrie,  
 And to Herodes abidyng in Parthos  
 Tidyng was brouht, ferde as he wolde die,  
 Of hertli sorwe fill into frenesie:  
 Heir was non left of the roial lynes,  
 Sauf thretti bastardis born of concubynes.

1908 When Orodes heard of Pacorus' death, he acted as if he were going to die and nearly went mad; for he had no sons left except 30 bastards.

Thus Herodes was cast in gret seeknesse,  
 His sonis deth was to hym importable,  
 His worldli ioie was gon and his gladnesse,  
 Fortune contrarie, which neuer can be stable;

1912 He was a very sick man; his worldly joy gone, old in years, Fortune contrary.

1882. meobles] richesse H, mouables P. 1883. the] that B.

1884. Pacorus P.

1889. at his ageyn] ageynst his geyn H.

1894. Cassus H. 1895. that] þe H.

Age fill on; his liff was nat durable: 1916  
 And of o thyng most he dede hym dreede,  
 Cause he hadde non heir to succede,  
 Which wold[e] nat suffre hym lyue in pes.  
 Til at the laste he cauhte a fantasie, 1920  
 Ches a bastard callid Pharaetes,  
 Because he was famous in cheualrie,  
 Gaf hym the crowne & the regalie,  
 Which anon aftir, breeffi to conclude, 1924  
 Slouh Herodes of ingratitude.

Finally he gave  
 the crown to  
 one of his  
 bastards named  
 Pharaetes and  
 soon after was  
 slain by him.

[How Fymbria a consul of Rome slouh himsilf.]<sup>1</sup>

Four mighty  
 princes cast  
 their look on  
 Bochas, like  
 unfortunat folk  
 who had  
 fallen from  
 Fortune's wheel.

**A**FFTIR to Bochas, bi processe of the book,  
 Foure mihti princis notable of estat,  
 Towardis hym thei caste cheer & look, 1928  
 Lik vnto folk that wer infortunat,  
 With whom Fortune had been at debat;  
 For be ther maner, as it sempte weel,  
 Thei wer at mischeeff fallyn from hir wheel. 1932

The first of  
 them, Fimbria,  
 a Roman consul  
 sent to help  
 Flaccus, whom  
 he found slain,  
 presumptuously  
 took command  
 of the army and  
 made himself be  
 called emperor.

First Fymbria, a Romeyn consuleer, [p. 321]  
 Sent bi the Romeyns to a gret cite  
 Callid Nichomeed[y]e, cam\* as a massageer  
 To helpe Flaccus, & entryng that contre, 1936  
 Fond Flaccus slayn bi gret aduersite.  
 Aftir whos deth, his parti to auauunce,  
 Of Flaccus meyne took the gouernauce.  
 Of presumpcioun, withoute auctori[t]e, 1940  
 This Fymbria bi dilligent labour,  
 Ful ferr abouen his staat & his degre,  
 Took upon hym bi Fortunys fals fauour  
 To be callid capteyn and emperour 1944  
 Thoruh al that cuntre, bokis speciefie;  
 Of whos presumpcioun Scilla had envie.

The result was  
 that Sulla  
 compelled him  
 to take refuge  
 in a castel,  
 where he slew  
 himself.

Pursued hym thoruh many gret cite,  
 To a castel made hym take his fliht, 1948  
 Wher Fymbria of gret necessite  
 Constreyned was, maugre al his myht,  
 Dispeired, forsake of eueri wiht,  
 To slen hymself, the stori tellith thus, 1952  
 Withynne the temple of Esculapius.

1935. cam] sent B. 1953. the] a H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

[Of Albynius that was slayn with stonys.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**NOPER consul stood in cas semblable,  
 In his tyme callid Albynyus,  
 Whos hatful pride was abhominable, 1956  
 To alle folkis lothsum and odious;  
 Which lik a rebel, wood & furious  
 Ageyn Romeyn[e]s oft[e]nere than onys, —  
 Whan he lest wende slay[e]n was *with* stonys. 1960

Another consul, Albinus, abominably proud, and odious to all men, rebelled against Rome and was stoned to death.

[How Adriane of low degre falsly vsurped to be kyng of Rome whiche *with* his cherlys was aftir brent.]<sup>2</sup>

**N**EXT Adrian, which ros to hih estat:  
 First in Roome born of lough degre,  
 Chose a pretour, sent bi þe senat  
 To gouerne of Affrik the contre, 1964  
 Wher of his owne pompous auctorite  
 Took upon hym bi sotil fals werkyng,  
 Maugre Romeyns, ther to be crowned kyng.

Adrian, born of low degree, became a praetor, and was sent to govern Africa, where he took upon himself to be crowned king.

Whom to supporte, shortli to conclude, 1968  
 Was a gret noumbre of the comounte,  
 Of cherlis gadred a confus multitude,  
 Title was non nor ground but volunte.  
 Gentil-men than beyng in that contre, 1972  
 Alle off assent and oon oppynyoun,  
 Assemble[d] hem to his destruccioun.

He was upheld by churls and had no title except his own will.

At Vtices, a large gret cite,  
 Hym and his cherlis besette round aboute, 1976  
 Of wode & faget with large quantite  
 In compas-wise closed hym withoute,  
 Gadred with hym of vileyns a gret route,  
 Leide on fyr, that with flawmes rede  
 Echon consumyd into asshes dede. 1980

The gentlemen of the country laid siege to him in Utica, and, piling up wood and faggots, burnt him into ashes together with a large number of his oafs.

1955. Albinus P.

1961. *This stanza is as follows in P:*

Next came Adrianus which to estate full hie  
 Rose in his time (and that ful sodeynlye)  
 First in Rome borne but of lowe degre  
 toke upon him to gouerne the countre  
 Off Affrike through hys great auctorite,  
 and by hys slye, subtell, and false werking,  
 Mauger Romains ther to be crowned king.

1975. Vtices] Stites H, Utica P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

[How Synthonys kyng of Trace þat moche coueted  
affor went and deied in pouerte.]<sup>1</sup>

Sothimus, king  
of Thraee, came  
tearfully to  
Bochas; for he  
was suddenly  
cast from his  
royal estate

**N**EXT Adrian cam Syntonyvs  
Tofor Bochas, *with* teris spreynt his face;  
As the stori rehersith vnto us, 1984  
In his tyme he was kyng of Trace,  
Falle sodenli fro Fortunis grace,  
Cast down lowe from his estat roiall,  
Which kam to Bochas to compleyne his fall. 1988

because he tried  
to conquer  
seven realms in  
Greece that  
were subject to  
Rome.  
He who covets  
all loses all.

Whos purpos was, yiff it wolde haue be,  
Seuene rewmys taue conquered *with* his hond,  
That were soget to Roome the cite;  
And alle seuene wer of Grekis lond. 1992  
Who al coueiteth, ye shal vndirstond,  
He al forgoth, ful weel afferme I dar,  
At vnset hour, wheroff ech man be war.

He was con-  
quered by  
Sentius and  
died in poverty.

Longe or his conquest was brouht to a preeff, 1996  
From hir wheel Fortune cast hym down.  
The pretour Sencyus brouht hym to myscheef,  
Deide in pouert, as maad is mencion.  
And Bochas heer maketh a digressioun, 2000  
Compendiousli withynne a litil space  
To descryue the regioun of Trace.

[Here Bochas in party makith a descripcioun of the  
kyngdam of Trace and passith over lightly to  
the accomplishment of his book.]<sup>2</sup>

¶ The discripsion of þe same.

Thrace, once a  
very famous  
country, was  
named after  
Tiras, son of  
Japhet. It lies  
towards the  
north beside  
the Danube,

**T**RACE, whilom a contre of gret fame,  
And conteneth a ful large space; 2004  
And of Tiras it took[e] first þe name,  
Sone of Iaphet, & so was callid Trace.  
Which many a day duelled in that place,  
Toward Septemptrion, plenteuous of good, 2008  
Beside Dynoe, the large famous flood.

1982. Next to Adrian P — Sothimus P.

1998. Sentius P.

2009. Dynoe] Danubie P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

Southward Trace renneth the flood Egee, [p. 322] and the Aegean  
 Macedoyne stant in the occident, Sea is to the  
 And the kyngdam callid Perpontide southward.  
 Stant in Trace toward the orient, 2012  
 Wher gret plente of blood was shad & spent,  
 Whan Sencyus thoruh his hih prowesse  
 Kyng Adrian ther manli dede oppresse. 2016

Ebrus in Trace is the cheeff ryueer,  
 As myn auctour maketh mencion; —  
 I caste nat to tarie in this mateer,  
 To make of Trace a descripcioun, 2020  
 But to proceede in my translacioun,  
 Folwe myn auctour, which writ a long processe  
 Of gret Pompeye & of his worthynesse.

The Hebrus is its chief river; but I shan't write any more about it, as I want to go on with my translation and tell about Pompey the Great.

[How aftir many grete conquestes of Duk Pompeye/ began grete werre betwixt him and Iulyus iij<sup>e</sup> M<sup>e</sup> were slayn/ and at last the heed of Pompeye smyten of.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HIS Pompeius, of whom þe name is kouþ, 2024  
 Wis & worþi & famous of prowesse, named after his  
 Took upon hym in his tendre youth, — father, whose  
 Afftir his fadir bi fortunat duresse, army he  
 Callid Pompeye, the stori berth witnesse, once led  
 Distrussid was bi sodeyn deth komyng, 2028  
 The stori seith, thoruh thundryng & lihtnyng,  
 His host destroyed be the violence  
 Of vnwar tempest, lik as seith the book, 2032  
 Fourti thousand slayn in that pestilence;  
 For feer the remnant anon þe feeld forsook, —  
 Til yonge Pompeie of corage on hym took  
 In his begynnyng proudli to proceede 2036  
 Ful lik a kniht his fadris host to leede.

Roome that tyme bi ther discencioun  
 Among hemsilf nih brouht[e] to ruyne,  
 Bi the froward fals dyuysious 2040  
 Tween Marie & Scilla, breefli to termyne,  
 Till that a newe sonne gan to shyne  
 Of worthynesse, which that shadde his liht,  
 In manli Pompeie the noble famous kniht. 2044

when it had been nearly destroyed by a sudden tempest.

Rome was at that time almost brought to ruin by the wars of Marius and Sulla, and it was then that the sun of Pompey began to shine.

2012. Propontidiee P. 2015. Sencyus] Sothimus P.  
 2016. dede] to H. 2017. Hebrus P. 2022. long] gret H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 131 verso.

- He slew Brutus, one of Marius' captains, in Lombardy. This said Pompeie, this noble knihtli man,  
At his begynnyng, thoruh his cheualrie,  
The proude capteyn slouh whan he began,  
Which of Marius heeld up the partie, 2048  
Callid Brutus, which in Lombardie  
Was be Pompeye thoruh knihtli gouernaunce  
With al his host[e] brouht vnto myschaunce.
- and also Gneus Carbo in Sicily to bring peace to Rome. In his begynnyng Pompeie eek also, 2052  
To sette Romeyns in reste & in quiete,  
Oon that was callid Gneus Carbo,  
He slouh hym knihtli whan he dede hym meete,  
Which in Sicile proudli heeld his seete. 2056  
And alle the contres aboute hym enviroon  
Pompeie made hem soget to Roome toun.
- Afterwards he reconquered Africa, defeating Domitius. Aftir al this Pompeius on the se  
With many a shippe stuffid with vitaille 2060  
Toward Affrik made a gret arme,  
And ther in haste aftir his aryuaille  
With Domicius hadde a gret bataille,  
Brouhte the contre thoruh his hih renoun 2064  
To be to Róome vndir subieccioun.
- He pursued Hiarbas, king of Numidia, Marius's ally, He pursued the grete myhti kyng  
Callid Iertha, to Marius fauourable,  
And hadde also his roial abidyng 2068  
In Numedie, a contre ful notable.  
Ageyn Pompeie his powerer was nat hable;  
For at a castell as thei mette in fiht,  
He slouh kyng Iertha, ful lik a manli kniht. 2072
- and in a short time brought the whole country to subjection. Thus in brief tyme, holdyng his passage  
For comoun proffit, as maad is mencionn,  
Bi his wisdam & knihtli hih corage  
Brouht al Affrik to subieccioun, 2076  
Which stood affor[e]n in rebelloun  
To the Romeyns; but al ther sturdynesse  
The said[e] Pompeie dede in haste redresse.
- In those days one Sertorius was Rome's greatest enemy, and he was slain by his own men. The grettest enmy ageyns Roome toun 2080  
Thilke daies was oon Sertorius;  
And of fortune, which is now up now down,  
On Pompeie onys was victorious.

2062. rivaile H, ryuaile R 3, ryuaille H 5.

2067, 72. Iertha] Iercha H, Hiarbas P. 2077. afforn stodee H.

- But aftir soone of hym it happid thus: 2084  
 Among his meyne fallyng at debat,  
 He slay[e]n was in his most hih estat.
- Aftir the deth of this Sertorivus  
 Cam Perpenna Pompeie for tassaile; 2088  
 And as thei mette anon[e] Pompeius  
 Ful lik a kniht slouh hym in bataile,  
 Which victorie gretli dide auaille  
 To the Romeyns. Aftir bi gouernaunce 2092  
 He brouht al Spayne to ther obeissaunce.
- Bi auctorite youe bi the Senat,  
 This noble Pompeie, for vail of the cite,  
 Vpon the se wolde suffre no pirat;  
 Wher-euer he cam from hym thei dede flee:  
 For with his shippis he scoured so the se  
 And bar hym ther so manli with his hond,  
 That maugre them he brouht hem to the lond. 2100
- Al the piratis and thes fals robbours  
 Igadred wern out of the regioun  
 Callid Silice\*, which lik to rauynours  
 Made ageyn Roome a conspiracioun, 2104  
 Robbede, spoilede, seillyng up & doun,  
 Romeyn marchauntis & peeple of ech contre,  
 That non was hardi to passe bi the se.
- Aftir Pompeie hath maad the se tobeie, 2108  
 That pirat non durst[e] theron abide,  
 He bi the Senat was sent out to werreye  
 Toward thorient, his knihtis be his side.  
 And wher-so-euer that he dide ride, 2112  
 Myn auctour writ, bynfluence of heuene  
 His conquest was swift as wynd or leuene.
- And to ences of his eternal glorie,  
 Perpetueli to geten hym a name, 2116  
 His laude & renoun to putte in memorie  
 He bilt a cite in Asia of gret fame,  
 Callid Nichopoli, Bochas seith the same,  
 Tween too floodis, the ton Araxzases, 2120  
 And the tothir was callid Eufrates.

Perpenna also  
 attacked  
 Pompey, but  
 was killed by  
 him in battle.

[p. 323] By the author-  
 ity of the  
 Senate, Pompey  
 scoured the sea  
 for pirates,

who gathered  
 together out of  
 Cilicia, robbing  
 Roman mer-  
 chants.

After he had  
 made the seas  
 safe, he was  
 sent to the  
 East,

where he made  
 swift conquests  
 and built the  
 city of  
 Nicopolis,  
 between the  
 Euphrates and  
 the Araxes,

2088. Perpenna P — for] *om.* H.

2100. brouht] brouh H. 2101. the] this H.

2103. Silice] Sicile B, J.

2120. Artaxerses H, Araxases J, Araxzases R 3, Araxes P.

- as a home for  
knights grown  
old and poor  
in the service  
of Rome.
- He bilte this cite onli of entent  
That Romeyn knihtis, which wer falle in age,  
And such as wer[e]n in the werris spent, 2124  
Sike, woundid, in pouert or in rage,  
Sholde of custum haue ther herbergage  
In that cite alway, & nat faille  
Beddyng, clothes, spendyng & vitaille. 2128
- He next rode  
into Armenia  
and defeated  
Tigranes, who  
had rebelled,
- Pompeye aftir rood into Armenye,  
Rebel to Roome, wher Tigranes was kyng.  
Fauht with hym ther, & thoruh his cheualrie  
Discounfited hym, ther was non abidyng. 2132  
Wher Tigranes hym silue submytting  
Vnto Pompeie with eueri circumstance,  
Euer tabide vndir his obeissaunce.
- and then  
marched in all  
haste to Asia  
and won the  
kingdom of  
Albania, where  
all the  
people are
- Than in al haste Pompeie gan hym hie 2136  
To ride in Asia, wher lik a manli kniht  
He gat the kyngdam callid Albanye,  
Which took his name, who-so looke ariht,  
Of whiht[e]nesse; for eueri maner wiht 2140  
That ther is born, be record of writyng,  
Whiht as snouh[e] hath his her shynyng.
- born with white  
hair, and there  
are dogs that  
can overcome all  
manner of wild  
beasts.
- Ther been houndis merueilous of nature,  
For tassaile bolis and leouns; 2144  
No wilde beeste ageyn hem may endure.  
So Pompeye, bi many regiouns  
Rood thoruh Armenye with his champiouns,  
Wher growen herbes that may neuer feynte, 2148  
What-euer colour men list with hem peynte.
- He conquered  
Iberia, Syria  
and Phoenice,  
the city named  
after Phoenix,
- Conquered rewmys aboute in eueri cost:  
Of Hiberie he gat the regeoun,  
And Artaces the kyng with al his host 2152  
Discounfited, as maad is mencionun.  
With his poweer to Surrie he cam doun,  
Than to Fenise, a cite of gret fame,  
Which of Fenix whilom took his name. 2156
- and took pos-  
session of Sidon  
and Ituraea,  
and passed the  
mountains of  
Lebanon into  
Judaea.
- Brouhte al thes contres to subieccioun:  
Of Sydonye, the myhti strong cite  
Of Iturye, he took pocessioun;  
Thoruh Arabie he cam doun to Iudee, 2160

2122. this] a H. 2139. ariht] riht H. 2149. to peynt H.  
2155. Phenice P. 2156. Phenix P — his] þe H.  
2158. Sidon P.



Which of Iewes was sumtyme the contre.  
Of Libanus he passed the mounteyn,  
Wher cedris growe[n], as auctour[e]s seyn.

Sent [to]forn hym, entryng in that reum,  
Oon Gabynus, a myhti strong constable;  
Regnyng that tyme in Iherusalem  
Aristobolus, a prince ful notable.

2164 Jerusalem was  
besieged by  
Gabinus for  
three months,  
Aristobolus  
then reigning,

And for the temple was strong & nat permiable, 2168  
Leide a siege aboute in breede & lengthe  
Space of thre monethes, & gat it so bi strengthe.

Thre thousand Iewes vndir the wal wer founde,  
Ded at thassat, which made resistance;  
The wal aftir doun beten to the\* grounde.

2172 and 3000 Jews  
died at the  
assault.

Pompeye afftir bi sturdi violence  
Is entrid in withoute reuerence,  
Sancta sanctorum men that place call,  
Made Hircanius hiest preest of all,

2176

The grete bisshop Aristobolus,  
Sent to Roome in myhti cheynis bounde.  
Toward Septemptrion, I fynde write thus,  
Gat seuene kyngdames with citees wallid rounde,  
Rebel to Roome, he dide hem confounde;  
With mihti suerd[e] gat al the contre  
Fro Caucasus doun to the Red[e] Se.

[p. 324] Aristobolus was  
sent to Rome  
in chains, and  
Pompey sub-  
dued seven  
rebel countries,  
conquering from  
the Caucasus  
to the  
Red Sea.

2180

2184

In his conquest, it sempte verraily  
As the goddis hadde doon ther cure,  
And that Fortune was with hem eek besi,  
This myhti Pompeye prince to assure,  
What-euer hym list be conquest to recure:  
In Spaigne he gat, whan thei wer rebell,  
Thre hundred citees & sixty\* strong castell.

2188 It seemed as if  
the gods and  
Fortune had  
united to assure  
him in his  
conquests,

Hard to remembre his conquestis euerichon,  
Alle the prowessis of this knihtli man:

2192 which were so  
many that it is  
hard to remem-  
ber them all.

Toward the parti of Septemptrioun  
A thousand castell I fynde that he wan,  
Sixe hundred mo, fro tyme that he gan,  
Eihte & thretti cites, out of doute,  
With myhti wallis closed round aboute.

2196

2164. toforn] frome H.

2168. nat] om. J — permiable] pregnable P. 2170. thre] iij B.

2173. doun beten to the] beten doun to B, J, H, R 3, P.

2191. sixty] thretti B. 2195. castellys J.

- He was chosen consul three times; and if you read, you will find that he was the peer of Alexander and Hercules.
- Peise his deedis, his conquestis marciall:  
Thries consul chose for his encre; 2200  
Reed, ye shal fynde how he was egall  
To Alisandre or to Hercules.  
Wher that euere he put hym silff in pres,  
Al cam to hand, concludyng, ye may see, 2204  
To comoun proffit of Roome the cite.
- Tryphanes, famous of eloquence, was chosen to put his conquests in writing at the public expense.
- His marciall deedis to putte in remembrance,  
Oon was chose to do his dilligence  
To enacte\* his conquest in substaunce 2208  
And his kniethod of synguler excellence;  
And Triffanes, famous of elloquence,  
Assigned was onto that labour,  
Took his guerdoun of ther comoun tresour. 2212
- Pompey became chief governor of Rome, Cesar then absent in Gaul,
- Pompeye of Roome was cheef gouernour,  
Cesar absent in Gaule, a ferre\* contre,  
Which tyme Pompeie stood in gret fauour  
Bothe of Fortune and Roome the cite, 2216  
Sumwhat maad blynd of his prosperite,  
Purposyng, in his clymyng nat stable,  
He wolde haue non that wer to hym semblable.
- but, as neither love nor high worship will have fellowship, he desired to be alone in power,
- Vnto purpos was saide ful yore agon, 2220  
How that loue nouter hih lordshipe, —  
Preeff hath be maad in many mo than oon, —  
Nouter of hem wolde haue no felashipe;  
Ech bi his oon wolde his parti keepe: 2224  
In thes too caas, brothir onto brothir  
Failleth at a poynt; ech wil put out othir.
- and made all the laws himself.
- To Pompeye resortyng now ageyn, —  
He took on hym al the gouernaille 2228  
Of the Romeyns, as ye haue herd me seyn,  
Bothe of estatis, comouns & poraille,  
And for his part al that myhte [a]vaille  
In makyng lawes, statut or decre, 2232  
Al up engrosed bi his auctorite.
- The enemies of Cesar conspired against him and enacted a statute forbidding men to hold office while absent from Rome.
- Folk this while which that had envie  
Toward Cesar in his longe absence,  
Leet make a lawe bi conspiracye 2236  
And a statut, concludyng in sentence,  
Withoute excepcioun, fauour or\* reuerence,

2208. enacte] encrece B, J. 2214. ferre] gret B.  
2225. caas] cases P, casys H 5. 2230. comoun H.  
2238. or] of B.

- No man sholde, be wil of the Senat,  
In his absence be chose to non estat, 2240  
Nor been admittid be no procutour  
Tae auctorite of dignite [n]or offis,  
In court of tribun nor off senatour  
To be promotid; this was ther auys, 2244  
Wer he neuer so manli nor so wis.  
This lawe ordeyned be folk envious,  
For hyndryng onli of Cesar Iulius.
- Whan Iulius knew al ther fals werking, 2248  
Fro Gaule sente up to the cite,  
Al the Senat requeryng be writyng  
To graunte hym bi ther auctorite  
Of tryumphe the notable dignite, 2252  
To haue also thoffis and thestat  
Callid in Roome the seconde consulat,  
For hym aleggyng many gret victorie  
In dyuers contres doon for the cite, 2256  
Many conquest notable of memorie  
Wrouht bi his kniethod; for which of equite  
Requeryng them guerdoned for to bee. .  
But contrarie vnto his entent 2260  
Denied hym al bi oon assent,
- Which was cheeff ground, roote & occasioun [p. 325] denied his re-  
That brouht in first the contrauersie, quest, and that  
Cyuile discordes, froward dyuysioun, was the chief  
Whan eueri man drouh to his partie, cause of the  
Of old hatreede to kyndle newe envie, civil war. 2264  
Causyng princis Iulius & Pompeie  
To ther confusioun ech othir to werreye. 2268
- The tryumphe denyed to Cesar, —  
Fraude of Pompeie made hym therof faile,  
Of whos deceit Iulius was war,—  
Made hym redi with many strong bataille, 2272  
Passed ouer the Alpies of Itaille,  
Fulli in purpos, pleyntli, yiff he myhte,  
With the Romeyns and Pompeie for to fihte.
- Thus gan the werre atween thes princis tweyne. 2276 prepared to  
Pompeye chose for parti of the toun fight the  
To been ther duk & capteyn souereyne Romans; and  
Ageyn Cesar, as maad is mencionn. thus the wars  
between these  
two princes  
began.

- And thus alas the desolacioun 2280  
 Suede of the cite, be many straunge signe,  
 With vnkouth toknis, whan thei gan maligne.
- At their begin-  
 ning strange  
 comets and  
 uncouth stars  
 were seen in  
 the sky, burning  
 like lamps all  
 night long,  
 and spears  
 and darts  
 flew about in  
 the air.
- At the gynnynge of thes woful werris,  
 In the heuene wer seyn dreedful sihtes — 2284  
 Sparklyng brondis, cometis, vnkouth sterris,  
 With flawme of fyr many feerful lihtes  
 Lik laumpis brennyng al the longe nihtes,  
 Castyng of speres, dartis in the hair, 2288  
 Wherbi Romeyns fill in gret despair.
- Great flashes  
 of lightning  
 came from the  
 north, and  
 stars were  
 visible at noon.  
 The sun shone  
 like blood; the  
 moon eclipsed;  
 and Mt. Ætna  
 cast red flames  
 towards Italy  
 from his caverns.
- From the parti of Septemprion  
 Toward Roome cam ful gret lihtnyng;  
 At non seyn sterris; lik blood the sunne shon; 2292  
 The moone eclipsed, terrible in shewyng;  
 The mount[e] Ethna, feerfulli brennyng,  
 From his cauernis cast up flawmys rede  
 Toward Itaille, which set hem in gret dreede. 2296
- Terrible waves  
 boiled up at  
 Charybdis; and  
 from the rocks  
 of Sicily was  
 heard the  
 howling of mad  
 hounds.
- Out of Karibdis, a daunger of the se,  
 Wawes terrible boiled up lik blood;  
 From the rokkes that in Cecile bee  
 Was herd howlyng of houndis that wer wood. 2300  
 Vesta the goddessse, in Roome ther she stood,  
 Mid hir temple was al with teres spreynt,  
 Whan the heuenli fyris wern afforn hir queynt.
- The statue of  
 Vesta was  
 sprinkled with  
 tears; the per-  
 petual fire that  
 burned before  
 her parted in  
 twain.
- Afforn this goddessse, at the aulter princepall 2304  
 Was fyr perpetuel brennyng day & niht,  
 Til werris cyuyle, hatful & mortal,  
 Gan\* among Romeyns, & the contagious fiht.  
 Than of vengauce anon was queynt the liht 2308  
 Tofor Vesta, the fire partyng on tweyne,  
 Of dyuisioun a tokne ful certeyne.
- Castles were  
 overturned by  
 sudden earth-  
 quakes; there  
 were tidal  
 waves, drowning  
 villages and  
 upsetting the  
 golden vessels  
 in the temples.
- Erthe-quaues sodeyn & terrible  
 Ouertournede castellis vp-so-down; 2312  
 With rage floodis hidous & horrible  
 Neptunvs dide gret destruccioun,  
 Drowned villages & many a mansioun,  
 Reuersed in templis of gold al ther vessellis, 2316  
 Threw down baners, standardis & pensellis.

2292. noon H, J. 2302. hir] his H.

2304. aulter] Aucteer H. 2307. Gan] Gat B.

Geyn these signes was founde non arest,  
The vnwar myscheeff koude no man declyne.

Leouns, wolues kam down fro the forest  
With many othir beestis sauagyne;

Wilde beris & serpentis of rauyne

Kam to the cite; & summe ageyn[e]s kynde

Spak as do men, in Bochas thus I fynde.

Dyuers foulis,\* which of ther nature

Haue in custum to fleen but a-niht,

Affor thes werris dede hemsilf assure

Euene at mydday, whan Phebus is most briht,

Thoruh the cite for to take her fliht.

Wommen with childre — the stori list nat feyne —

Brouht fourth summe that hadde hedis tweyne.

Tofor thes werris, that callid wer cyuile,

Senatours beyng in Roome toun

Cam to the woman that callid was Cybile,

Vnto hire made this questioun:

To declare bi short conclusioun,

Among ther other questioun[e]s all,

Of ther cite what fortune sholde fall?

To whom she gaff an ansuere ful obscure,

Wherupon she made hem sore muse:

Took hem sixe lettres set in pley<sup>n</sup> scripture,

Which in no wise thei myhte nat refuse,

For false rihtis that thei dede vse;

Lik the thre lettres twies set in noumbre,

Who vndirstondeth, thei shal the toun encoumbre.

Thre R. R. R. first[e] she set on a rowe

And thre F. F. F. in ordre faste bi, —

Long tyme aftir or thei koude knowe

Thexposicioun therof openly,

Til ther dyuynours gan serche sotilly

To fynde[n] out, lik to ther entente,

Be the sexe lettres what Cibile mente.

Off this woord Regnum the first lettre is R,

So is the capital off Roome the cite;

Who looke ariht, the thridde is nat ferrø, —

No man could  
turn away the  
mischief.

2320 Lions and  
wolves came  
down from the  
forests to  
Rome, wild  
bears and  
ferocious ser-  
pents speaking  
the language  
of men.

2324 Night birds  
were seen flying  
at midday;  
and some  
women brought  
forth children  
with two heads.

2332 Before the wars  
the senators  
went to Sibylla  
and inquired  
the fate of  
the city.

2336

She set six  
letters in a row,

2340

2344

[p. 326] three R's and  
three F's; and  
it was long  
before the  
diviners could  
find out that  
the letters  
meant,

2348

2352

Regnum  
Romae  
Ruēt;

2318. founde] doon H. 2324. thus] as H.

2325. foulis] folkis B, folkys J. 2326. on niht H.

2340. sore] full sore H. 2341. sixe] vj B — pley<sup>n</sup>] om. H.

2351. lik] firste lik H. 2352. the] thes H.

2354. ist the] om. H.

- This woord Ruet gynneth with R, parde. 2356  
 Of which[e] woordes whan thei ioyned be,  
 The sentence concludeth in meenyng,  
 Off ther cite the ruynous fallyng.
- Ferro, Flamma, Fames.** Touchyng thre F. F. F., who can aduertise, 2360  
 Of this woord Ferro, F go[e]th toforñ;  
 And the cheeff lettre off Fames to deuysse  
 Is F also, the processe weel forth born.  
 The same of Flamma, bi which þe toun was lorn, 2364  
 Off which resouns make a coniunccioun,  
 Causing of Roome fynal destruccioun.
- Fire, sword and hunger, froward ambition, the shewing of comets and strange stars and wilful division accomplished the ruin of Rome. Fyr, swerd & hunger caused be the werris,  
 Desyr of clymyng, froward ambicioun, 2368  
 Shewyng of cometis & of vnkouth sterris,  
 With pronostikes off [ther] deserccioun,  
 Werst of alle, wilful dyuysioun  
 Among hemsilff bi vnwar violence, 2372  
 Off lettres sexe accomplisshid the sentence.
- The wars between Cesar and Pompey lasted long and caused the death of many a Roman, as Lucan testified. The suerd of Cesar, werris of Pompeye,  
 Tween thës tweyne lastyng a long[e] while, 2376  
 Made many Romeyn & Italien to deie,  
 Bi the batailes that callid wer cyuile,  
 With prophecies remembred of Cebile,  
 As the wrytyng ful weel reherse can, 2380  
 Of the old poete that callid was Lucan.
- In the temple of Mars the priests offered up their blood with lamentacions; for the gods were contrary to Rome. In Martes temple on heihte wher he stood,  
 And Bellona, the goddesse despitous,  
 The preestes cried & offred up ther blood 2384  
 With lamentaciouns, lik folkis furious,  
 Cause off toknys fell and contrarious  
 Which that wer shewed in that seyntuarie,  
 How ther goddis to Romeyns wer contrarie.
- The voices of madmen were heard among the dead bones in their graves, and the cry of ghosts in field and cavern, terrifyng the agriculturists. Mong dede bonys that leyn in ther grauis 2388  
 Wer vois es herd lik wood men in ther rages,  
 Cry of goostis in cauernys & causy,  
 Herd in feeldis, paththis & passages;  
 Laboureres fledde hom to ther villages. 2392  
 Serpentis, adderes, scaled siluer\* briht,  
 Wer ouer Roome seyn fleeyng al the niht.

2373. sexe] vj B.

2375. attween H — longe] gret H, J, great P. 2378. of] by H.

2387. ther] þat H. 2390. &amp;] &amp; in H.

2393. siluer] wonder B.

Another tokne, pitous for to heere,  
Which astoned many proud Romeyn,  
Dede bodies\* dide in the feeld appeere,  
Which in bataille hadde afforn be slayn,  
From ther tombis arisyng wher thei layn,  
Which in the werris, woful & despitous,  
Wer slayn be Scilla & proude Marrius.

2396 Serpents with  
scales of silver  
flew over the  
city all the  
night, and  
corpses of men  
slain before in  
the wars of  
Marius and  
Sulla arose  
from their  
tombs.

2400

It was eek tolde bi ther dyuynours,  
How Pompeyus was lik to haue a fall,  
And how thestat of Romeyn emperours  
With ther tryumphes that been imperial  
At Iulius first ther begynne\* shal;  
And afftir hym thestat shal foort[h] proceede  
Be eleccioun or lyneal kynreede.

2404 Pompey's fall  
was fore-  
told by  
diviners, who  
said also that  
the estate of  
Roman  
emperor would  
begin with  
Cæsar.

2408

To withstonde the power of Cesar,  
Which toward Roome took his weie riht,  
Pompeye was sent, wis, manli & riht war;  
But whan he herd[e] tellyn of the myht  
Of Iulius, he took hym to the fliht;  
Eek alle the senatours with hym dede flee  
Toward Epire, in Grece a strong cite.

2412 Pompey was  
sent out to  
withstand the  
power of  
Cæsar, but  
fled together  
with the  
senators to  
Epirus,

Pompeye was old, famous in cheualrie,  
Cesar but yong [&] hardi for tassaille.  
Vpon the pleyns of Grece & Thesalie  
Pompeye & he hadde a gret bataille:  
Geyn Iulius suerd no Romeyn mihte auaille;  
Constreyned of force the feeld[e] to forsake,  
Toward Egipt thei haue the weie take.

2416 where there  
was a great  
battle on the  
plains of Thes-  
saly. Pompey  
lost and sought  
refuge in  
Egypt,

2420

Pompeye thoruh Cipre cam to Tholome,  
Bi a gret watir at Paphus dede aryue;  
On the stronde ther he dide see  
A statli place, & up he wente blyue,  
The name of which, pleynli to descryue,  
Cacabosile the contre dede it call,  
Of which[e] name the fortune is thus fall:

2424 journeying  
by way of  
Cyprus and  
landing first at  
Catobasilea,  
which means  
"unfortunate  
arrival."

2428

2397. bodies] bonys B.

2406. ther] om. J — begynnyng B.

2417. &] om. J, R 3.

2418. playn H.

2424. Paphos P.

2426. & ther he went vp blive H.

2428. Cacobasile P.

At this he  
fell in despair,  
and, sailing on,  
came to Egypt.

The name tokne of froward arryuail,  
Sownyng in Greek vnhappi auenture. [p. 327]  
Be which the trust of Pompeie did[e] faille, — 2432  
Fill in dispeir, myht it nat recure, —  
Forsook that ile, dede his besi cure  
To take a shipp, so bi the se saillyng  
Toward Egipt, wher Tholome was kyng. 2436

He hoped to be  
helped by  
Ptolemy; but  
Ptolemy, pre-  
tending friend-  
ship, told his  
men to murder  
him,

Of trust he fledde to this Tholome,  
In hope he sholde fynde in hym socour:  
Fair cheer shewed vndir duplicite,  
Failed at the poynt, gaf hym feynt fauour, 2440  
Al-be Pompeye bi his freendli labour  
Crownid hym kyng in Egipt, as I fynde,  
To whom ageyn he was fals & vnkynde.  
To meete Pompeye he leet stuffe a barge 2444  
Be a maner pretence of freendliheede,  
Gaff his meynē that wer ther in charge  
To moordre Pompeie, behiht hem a gret meede.  
Tweyne ther wern, which to hym bar hatreede; 2448  
And in the vessel, *with* sharp suerdis whette,  
Or he was war[e], of his hed thei smette.

and Achilles  
and Photinus  
smote off his  
head. Born of  
gentle stock, he  
was one of  
the best knights  
of his time;

The ton of hem was callid Achilles,  
And his felawe namyd was Fotyne. 2452  
Took up the hed[e] of that prince, alas,  
Famous in kniethod, born of gentil lyne,  
Among Romeyns, as auctours determyne,  
Holde in his tyme, yiff men doon hym riht, 2456  
Thoruh al the world[e] oon the beste kniht.

but earthly  
princes, for all  
their pompous  
fame, first took  
their title by  
murder and  
extortion; and  
by the burning  
of countries and  
conquest by  
violence rose to  
dominion.  
300,000 men,  
not counting  
kings and  
praetors, con-  
suls and cen-  
turiens, were  
slain.

Thus erthli princis, *with* al ther pompous fame,  
Which thoruh the\* world yiuēp so gret a soun,  
Of slauhtre & moordre thei took[e] first *per* name, 2460  
Bi fals raayne and extorsioun  
Clamb up so first to domynacioun.  
Brennyng of contres, conquest bi violence  
Sette hem in chaires of worldli excellence. 2464  
In this bataile, which callid was cyuyle,  
Hold atween Pompeye & Cesar Iulius,  
Thre hundred thousand slay[e]n in a while,  
Thre thousand take, the stori tellith thus, 2468

2440. Failed] faillyng H. 2448. bar] born H.  
2459. the] al the B, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.



Withoute princis notable & glorious,  
As kyngis, pretours, reknid all attonys,  
Tribunys, consulis & centuryonys.

Phebus on the soil myht nat his bemys spreede, 2472 The rays of  
Nor on the ground shewe out his cleer[e] liht; the sun could  
Men that wer slay[e]n lay so thikke on breede, not strike the  
That of the erthe no man hadde a siht. ground for the  
Wolues, beres, rauynous foul off fliht, dead, which  
Kam gret plente to feede hem ther ech day were eaten by  
Beside the ryueer of Nile wher thei lay. 2476 wolves and  
bears and  
ravenous fowls.

Gobetis of flesh, which foulis dede arace  
Fro dede bodies, born up in the hair, 2480 Gobbets of flesh  
Fill from ther clees vpon Iulius face, fell from the  
Amyd the feeld wher he had his repair. claws of birds  
Made his visage bloodi & nat fair, upon Julius'  
Al-be that he to his ences of glorie face, soiling it  
Hadde thilke day of Romeyns the victorie. 2484 with blood.

The hed of Pompeye, brouht *with* his statli ring,  
Offrid up to Iulius hih presence,  
He be *compassioun*, the moordre aduertisyng, 2488 The head of  
Of his innat imperial excellence Pompey and  
Brast out to weepe, & in his aduertense his ring of  
Thouhte gret pite, a prince of so gret myht state were  
Sholde so be slayn, that\* was so good a knyht. 2492 brought to  
Cæsar, who  
burst into tears  
of pity.

The corps abood withoute sepulture,  
Til oon Coodrus of *compassioun*  
Aftir the bataille & disconfiture  
Besouht[e] hym, of gret affeccioun, 2496 His body was  
To hide the trunke lowe in the sondis down. buried by  
Souhte tymbir, and ther he fond but smal, Codrus in the  
To doon exequies with fires\* funeral. sand, and  
there was  
but little wood  
for a funeral  
pyre.

Now, sithe this prince kam to such myscheeff, 2500 What trust is  
Moordred and slayn bi Tholome the kyng: there in any  
Heer of hir power Fortune hath maad a preeff, worldly thing?  
What trust ther is in any worldli thyng. Think of this  
Aftir his deth wantid he nat buriyng? — proud Pompey  
This proude Pompeie, so famous of his hond, deuoured by  
Of fissh deuoured, as he lay on quik sond! 2504 fishes, as he lay  
in quicksand.

2482. had] made H — his] om. J.

2489. Iunat B. 2492. that] &amp; B. 2499. fires] feestis B.

What store  
should men set  
by transitory  
things and  
worldly glory?

What shal men sette bi poweer or noblesse  
Of\* slidyng goodis or any worldli glorie, 2508  
Which to restreyne may be no sekirnesse?  
Fortune and the world is transitorye;  
Thouh Mars to-day yiue a man victorie,  
Parcas to-morwe vnwarli he shal deie, — 2512  
I take record of Cesar and Pompeie.

Since all stands  
under the con-  
trol of Fortune,  
look, worldly  
men, to that  
place where  
the Blind Lady  
has no power.

Sith al stant vndir daunger of Fortune, [p. 328]  
Ye worldli men doth your look up-dresse  
To thilke place wher ioie doth ay contune; 2516  
The Blynde Ladi hath ther non interesse.  
Set pride aside, tak you to meeknesse,  
To sue vertu doth treuli your labour,  
Geyn worldli pompe mak Pompeie your merour! 2520

### Lenvoye.

This tragedy of  
Duke Pompey  
declares that  
vain ambition  
to have lordship  
was the chief  
cause of the  
war between  
him and Cæsar.

**T**HIS tragedie of the duk Pompeie  
Declareth in gros þe cheef occasioun  
Whi he and Cesar gan first to werreie,  
Ech ageyn othir, thoruh veyn ambicioun 2524  
To haue lordshipe and domynacioun  
Ouer the Romeyns, bi fauour, fraude or myht, —  
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong or riht.

Pride is un-  
willing to obey  
truth; wise  
policy, prudent  
counsel and  
discretion are  
far away.  
Possession cares  
not for wrong  
or right.

To trouthis parti pride is loth tobeie; 2528  
Extort poweer doth gret destruccioun;  
Wis policie al out of the weie,  
Prudent counsail, age with discrecioun  
Loste ther liberte of free eleccioun. 2532  
Who was most strong, with hym heeld euery wiht, —  
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

Finally Fortune  
cast them both  
down from her  
wheel; for their  
eyes were made  
blind by subtille  
deceit, fraud  
and collusion.

Swich dyuysioun made many man to deie,  
Brouhte the cite to desolacioun. 2536  
With these too princis Fortune list to pleie,  
Til from hir wheel she cast hem bothe down.  
Sotil deceit, fraude & collusioun  
Bambicious clymyng blente ther bothe liht, — 2540  
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

Noble princis, remembreth what I seie,  
 Peiseth this stori withyne in your resoun,  
 Of fals surmountyng auarice berth þe keie, 2544  
 Record of Cesar, Pompeye of Roome toun,  
 Whos wilful werris, hatful discencioun  
 Yiueth cleer warnyng to you & eueri wiht,  
 No cley m is worth withoute title of riht. 2548

Noble Princes,  
 remember  
 Cæsar and  
 Pompey of  
 Rome.  
 No claim is  
 valid without  
 title of right.

[How victorious Iulius Cesar brent the vessels of  
 Tholome slouh Achilles that wolde ha moordred  
 him & after grete victories himsilf was mordred  
 with boidekens bi brutus Cassius.]<sup>1</sup>

AFFTIR the woful compleint lamentable  
 Of Pompeis dethe, pitous for to heere,  
 Werris remembrid, with tresouns importable, 2552  
 Compassid fraudis farcid with fair cheere,  
 Conspired moordre, rehersid the maneere  
 How kyng Tholome, fraudulent of corage,  
 The deth conspired of Pompeie fall in age.  
 The processe tolde, I holde it wer but veyn 2556  
 Therof to write a newe tragedie;  
 Thyng onys said, it to reherse ageyn,  
 It wer but idil, as for that partie.  
 But how Cesar went out of Thessalie, 2560  
 Kam Talisaundre to logge hym in that place,  
 I wil remembre with support of your grace.  
 He logged was in his paleis roiall,  
 Wher he was besi, be diligent labour 2564  
 Thoruh that regioun in templis ouerall  
 To spoile goddis and haue al ther tresour,  
 Wher he was mokkid, fond ther no fauour;  
 For Achilles, which that slouh Pompeie, 2568  
 Cast hym with Cesar proudli to werreie.  
 His purpos was to falle upon Cesar,  
 As of nature was his condicioun  
 Falsli to moordre men or thei wer war,— 2572  
 Bi sum sleihte to fynde occasioun  
 To destroye Iulius be tresoun,  
 And tacomplisshe his purpos in partie  
 Hadde twenti thousand in his cumpanye. 2576

After the woeful  
 complaint of  
 Pompey's death  
 and the manner  
 of King Ptole-  
 my's conspir-  
 ing it,

I hold it vain  
 to write thereof  
 a new tragedy;  
 but I will tell  
 how Cæsar  
 went to Alex-  
 andria

and busied him-  
 self in spoiling  
 temples, finding  
 little encourage-  
 ment, for  
 Achilles, who  
 slew Pompey,

withstood him  
 with 20,000  
 men, hoping  
 to fall upon  
 and destroy  
 him.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 134 recto.

2561. Alexandry P.

- Achillas, who was leader and constable of the Egyptians, intended to give battle to the Romans, but Cæsar burnt Ptolemy's navy
- This Achillas, fals, cruel, deceyuable,  
Cast hym deceyue Cesar yif he myhte,  
Of Thegipcien leader and constable  
With the Romeyns purposeth for to fihte. 2580  
But whan Cesar therof hadde a sihte,  
He is descendid, & faste bi the se  
Brent al the nauue of kyng Tholome.
- together with a great part of the city and the famous library of 40,000 volumes.
- Alle the vesselis wer dryue up with a flood 2584  
To gret damage of seide Tholome;  
Iulius brente hem euene ther thei stood,  
And a gret part beside of the cite.  
And ther was brent, which was ful gret pite, 2588  
The famous librarie in Egipt of the kyng,  
Ful fourti thousande volumys ther liggynge.
- Bochas says that it was highly commendable of Ptolemy to gather together such a notable collection of books for the use of scholars.
- In which thyng Bochas reherseth in sentence,  
How Tholome was gretli comendable, 2592  
That thoruh his besi roial prouydence  
Made hymself a librarie so notable;  
For to al clerkis in studie that wer hable,  
Of seuene sciences, the stori maketh mynde, 2596  
Lik ther desire myhte bookis fynde.
- After this fire, there was a battle, and Cæsar, near defeat, took a barge from Egypt
- Afftir this fyr, in Farus the contre, [p. 329]  
The Egipcien hadde a gret bataille, 2600  
Wher Cesar was of gret necessite  
That day constreyned, whan the feeld gan faille,  
Take a barge from Egipt for to saille,  
But so gret pres[e] folwed at his bak,  
Almost the vessel was lik to go to wrak. 2604
- and narrowly escaped being wrecked. He was forced to swim 200 paces to land in his heavy armour.
- Cesar armyd, with lettres in his hond,  
Put his persone that day in auenture;  
Two hundred pas manly swam to lond,  
And kunnyngli to lond he doth recure, 2608  
Natwithstondyng his heuy strong armure.  
But yit toforn or Cesar took the se,  
He in the feeld hadde take Tholome.
- He then took Ptolemy prisoner and slew Achillas and all his fellows.
- And Achillas, the moordrere of Pompeie, 2612  
With alle his felawes that wer of assent  
Wer slayn that day; ther went[e] non aweye:  
Many Egipcien the same tyme brent.  
Cesar of mercy for Tholome hath sent, 2616
2582. the] om. H. 2590. thousande] M B.  
2598. Pharos P. 2604. to wrak] awrak H.

- To Alisaundre sent hym hom of newe,  
 Charging he sholde to Romeyns forth be trewe.
- But whan he was delyuered fro prisoun,  
 Of Egipcians in Alisaundre the cite, 2620  
 From eueri coost he gadred gret foisoun,  
 Ageyn Iulius kam doun with his meyne;  
 But yit for al his hasti cruelte,  
 Swich resistence Cesar gan to make, 2624  
 That\* twenti thousand that day wer slayn & take.
- Sixti galeis nat ferr fro the lond,  
 Tuelue thousand men komyng to Tholome, —  
 Echon wer yolde and brouht onto the hond 2628  
 Of Iulius his prisoneres to bee.
- Than Tholomeus besied hym to flee  
 Toward the watir, wher maugre al his myht,  
 He drowned was in his gret hasti fiht. 2632
- He knowen was bi his riche haberioun,  
 Of gold and steel[e] it was entermaylid,  
 Bi Cesar sent onto the roial toun,  
 Which for diffence was strongli enbatailed, — 2636  
 Bokelis of gold richeli enamailed,  
 Which[e] toknis anon as thei haue seyn,  
 Dispeired to Cesar sente ageyn.
- Of them to Cesar was maad feith & homage; 2640  
 The rewme of Egypt brouht to subieccioun,  
 Til he of grace and merciful corage\*  
 To Cleopatra gaff al that regioun,  
 Longyng to hire be successioun, 2644  
 Be title of riht that tyme & non othir,  
 Because only Tholome was hir brothir.
- Kyng Lagus whilom in his testament,  
 Fadir to Cleopatra & to Tholome, 2648  
 Toforn his deth bi gret auisement  
 Cleerli enacted his laste volunte,  
 That his kyngdam departid sholde be,  
 Half to Tholome, as his bequethe was, 2652  
 The tothir halff to queen Cleopatras.

Ptolemy was taken to mercy and sent home with the bidding to be loyal to Rome; but as soon as he was set free he came down against Cæsar with an army and lost 20,000 of his men,

60 galleys and 12,000 more men, who were on their way to aid him.

Ptolemy fled towards the sea and was drowned. His body was recognized by its rich armour with golden buckles.

The Egyptians submitted to Cæsar, and he made Cleopatra, Ptolemy's sister, queen.

Their father had devised the kingdom to both of them, each to rule one half;

2620. Alisaundry P. 2625. That] Than B.

2632. his] þe H.

2634. entirmailed J, entirmailed R 3, entyrmaylled H 5, entermayled P.

2642. corage] werkyng B. 2646. only] only þat H.

but Ptolemy  
had kept his  
sister in prison  
to deprive her  
of her share.

She bi hir brothir was holde in prisoun  
To keepe hir wrongli from hir heritage,  
Wheroff Cesar hadde compassioun, 2656  
Purposed hym to reforme hir damage.  
And whil that he heeld ther his hostage,  
Of equite, of lawe and of resoun,  
Of al Egipt gaff hir pecessioun. 2660

Then came  
Juba, king of  
Lybia, a proud  
and cruel man,  
who hated the  
last Scipio be-  
cause he suc-  
ceeded Pompey  
as consul and  
wore purple,  
which Juba  
claimed was  
fitting only for  
himself as king.

¶ Than kam Iuba, of Libie lord & kyng,  
Sowere of stryues and discencioun,  
Proud, hih of port, cruel in werkyng,  
Which in especial hadde indignacioun 2664  
Vnto the worthi laste Scipioun,  
Cause he was chose, lik as bookis seie,  
To succede next consul to Pompeie.

This Iuba eek bar to hym gret hatreede,  
Souht a quarel ageyn hym for o thyng,  
Cause that he was clad in purpil weede,  
For hym aleggyng, how onli that clothyng  
No maner estat sholde vse but a kyng: 2672  
Mente for hymself, sitting in roial throne,  
He wold as kyng that colour were\* allone.

Bochas makes a  
digression here  
and says that  
no nation is so  
wasteful of  
clothing as the  
people of  
Almayne.

Heer myn auctour maketh a digressioun,  
Puttyng exauple of Almayne the contre; 2676  
Seith that ther is non othir nacioun  
Touchyng array that is so disgise  
In wast of cloth and superfluite,  
Rehersyng her\* in ful pleyn langage, 2680  
In many wise such wast doth gret damage.

Such super-  
fluity in attire  
causes pride  
and gives occa-  
sion for lust  
and brings  
people to  
poverty and  
makes the rich  
disdainful of  
the poor.

It causeth pride and ambicioun, [p. 330]  
Ageyn the vertu of humylite;  
To lecherie it yiveth occasioun, 2684  
Which is contrarie\* vnto chastite.  
Wast of array sett folk in pouerte,  
Causeth also such costage spent in veyn  
Off othir porere to haue ful gret disdeyn. 2688

2658. that] om. H.

2662. dissenciouns H.

2674. that colour were] vse that colour B.

2680. her] ther B.

2685. contraire B, J.

- Wher superfluite is vsid of aray,  
 Riot folweth, proud port & idilnesse;  
 With wast of tyme dryue forth the day,  
 Late drynkyng, wach, surfet, dronkenesse,  
 Engendreth feueres & many græt excesse.  
 Thus eueri surfet englued is to othir,  
 And o mysreule bryngeth in anothir.
- God suffreth weel ther be a difference  
 Touchyng array, as men been of degre:  
 Hih estatis, that stonde in excellence,  
 Mut be preferrid, of resoun men may see;  
 As cloth of gold, stonis & perre  
 Was for princis, with othir fressh clothynge,  
 But speciali purpil was for kyngis.
- Thus was ther set, of hih discrecioun,  
 Array accordyng to princis hih noblesse;  
 And for othir estatis lower down,  
 Lik ther degrees tween pouert & richesse,  
 An ordre kept from scarsete & excesse,  
 A mene prouided atween hih & lowe,  
 Lich to hymselff[e] ech man may be knowe.
- But kyng Iuba, insolent & mad,  
 Of surquedie kauht [an] oppynyoun  
 That non but he in purpil shal\* be clad,  
 Causyng debat tween hym & Scipioun.  
 Yit wer thei parti bothe with Roome toun  
 Ageyn Cesar, and drouh toward Pompeie,  
 For which at myscheef bothe thei dide deie.
- Whan Iuba felte hymself of noun poweer  
 Ageyn Cesar to holde chaumpartie,  
 For sorwe he loste contenance & cheer;  
 Of hih disdeyn[e] and malencolie  
 Callid on Pectryn, a kniht off his allie,  
 Made hym bassent that thei wer bothe fayn  
 Felli to fihte til oon off hem was slayn.
- Ageyn nature was this straunge fiht,  
 Ech to slen othir, & knew no cause whi, —  
 But for kyng Iuba was an hardi kniht,  
 He slouh his felawe and abood proudli,

Riot, proud behaviour, idleness and drunkenness follow, engendering fevers and agues: each surfeit gives rise to another, and all move in a vicious circle.

God permits a difference in clothing: high estates must be well dressed and wear cloth of gold and jewels; and purple is the colour for kings.

Other estates lower down should array themselves according to their degrees.

King Juba, insolent and mad, thought that he alone was entitled to wear purple, and quarrelled with Scipio, although both were against Cæsar.

When he saw that he was too weak to fight Cæsar, he lost heart, and in a rage challenged Petreus, a knight of his acquaintance, to mortal combat.

Juba killed his friend Petreus, and then chose to die himself rather than live in bondage.

2693. excesse H, J, R 3, P, H 5. 2708. providyng H.

2712. but he non shal in purpil B.

2721. peyntryn H, Peitryn J, Peytryn R 3, H 5, Petreus P.

And rather ches to deien wilfulli, 2728  
 Of hih despiht[e] & of proud corage,  
 Than vndir Cesar to lyuen in seruage.

So he summoned another friend, and, giving him a large reward, bade him smite off his head.

Maad calle a man whom he loued weel,  
 Gaff vnto hym gret gold & gret guerdoun 2732  
 To take a suerd[e] forgid of fyn steel,  
 And make theroff no long dilacioun,  
 But bad he sholde, for short conclusioun,  
 Take upon hym, & haue no feer nor dreed, 2736  
 Withoute tarieng to smyten of his hed.

Aristobolus, who had been sent prisoner to Rome by Pompey, was released by Caesar, and hoped to regain his kingdom.

Thus kyng Iuba rather ches to deie  
 Than lenger lyue in subieccioun  
 Vndir Cesar; he loued so weel Pompeye. 2740  
 ¶ Than next to Bochas, as maad is mencion,  
 Cam Aristobolus, with face & look cast down,  
 Which was to\* Roome, afforn as I haue told,  
 Sent bi Pompeye to\* be kept in hold. 2744

[Aristobolus.]

Which aftir was delyuered fro prisoun  
 Bi help of Cesar in ful hasti wise,  
 Stondyng in hope of his regioun 2748  
 To be restored vnto the fraunchise,  
 Wher Hircanus, as ye haue herd the guise,\*  
 Preferred was, to his gret foorth[er]yng,  
 Bi Pompeie of Iewes crowned kyng.

Unfortunately he fell into the hands of a captain who had been in Pompey's service and who killed him by poisoning.

Which Aristobolus hopeth to recure, 2752  
 Caste menys ther to regne ageyn,  
 Wrouhte theron, dide his besi cure,  
 Whos hasti labour was but spent in veyn.  
 Fill in the handis of a proud capteyn 2756  
 Which that whilom was longyng to Pompeie;  
 And he with poisoun vnwarli made hym deye.

[How the last Scipioun Consulere of Rome for he  
 not list to lyue in seruage of Iulyus roff himsilf  
 to þe hert.]<sup>1</sup>

Next appeared the last of the Scipios, who was defeated together with Iuba by Cæsar.

**N**EXT cam the laste worthi Scipioun,  
 Which aftir Pompeie was maad consuleer, 2760  
 With whom Iuba was at discencioun  
 For weryng purpre, as it was told wol er,

2743. to] in B. 2744. to] for to B. 2748. the] his H.  
 2749. the guise] deuse B. 2750. to] in H. 2762. purpull H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 135 recto.



And aftirward fill in ful gret[e] feer,  
Whan Cesar hadde withynne Libie-lond 2764  
Outraied [hem] bothe with strong & myhti hond.

Wherbi Sipioun gan fallen in despair, [p. 331] Despairing, he  
Loste his cheer, as man disconsolat, took ship to  
With thre Romeyns gan make his repair, — 2768 Spain, but was  
Damasippus, Plectorie and Torquat, — Africa,  
Goyng to shipe, the tyme infortunat,  
Toward Spayne; but tempest gan hem dryue,  
That thei in Affrik vnwarli dede aryue. 2772

Scipioun seeyng this woful caas sodeyne, where Sicius, a  
How he was brouht vnwarli to myscheeff; pirate friendly  
For Scicius, a myhti strong capteyn, to Cesar, fell  
Be yng a pirat and off the se a theeff, 2776 on him,  
Which is a name of ful gret repreeff, —  
The same pirat, longyng to Cesar,  
Fill on Scipioun or that he was war,

Be yng in purpos take hym prisoneer 2780 intending to  
Withynne his shipp tofor n his arryuail; take him  
For which, alas, dulle gan his cheer, prisoner.  
His contenance appallen & eek faille. In his extrem-  
To fynde counfort no man coude hym counsaile, 2784 ity he pulled  
Pullid out a suerd, whan he myht nat a-sterete, out a sword  
And roof hym silff[e] euene to\* the herte. and thrust it  
into his heart.

This was the eende of laste Scipioun: He, too, died  
Leuere he hadde at myscheef for to deie 2788 rather than be  
Than vndir Cesar lyn fetrid in prisoun a captive of  
Or to his lordshipe in any wise obeye. Cesar.  
¶ To Bochas next hym cam Pompeye, After him,  
Sone and heir to gret[e] Pompeius, Pompey, son  
Contraire also to Cesar Iulius, 2792 and heir of  
before Bochas.

Hadde brethren & sistren mo than oon, He and his  
And many another of ther alliaunce. brothers and  
And of assent thei cast hem euerichon, 2796 sisters deter-  
Ther fadris deth hauyng in remembraunce, mined to be  
Vpon Cesar to take therof vengauce, revenged on  
Eek upon Tholomee, which bi collusioun Cesar and  
Slouh ther fadir bi ful fals tresoun. 2800 Ptolemy.

2775. Sicyus H, Sicius R 3, P.

2783. H inserts the word purpose before contenance.

2786. to] thoruh B, H 5.

- Pompey fought with Cæsar in Spain, and, put to flight, The eldest brothir callid eek Pompeye,  
 Beyng in Spaigne with ful gret apparail,  
 Cast hym of newe Cesar to werreye  
 And his peple proudli to assaille.\* 2804  
 And, as I fynde, ther was a gret bataille,  
 In which Pompeie, the eldest sone of thre,  
 Bi Iulius men constreyned was to flee.
- and not knowing what to do, hid in a cave and was slain. He fond no socour nor receipt hym to saue, 2808  
 Off his lyff, he, stondyng in gret dreed,  
 Knowyng no reffut, fledde into a caue,  
 Tescape\* away knew no bettir reed,  
 Wher he was slayn; to Cesar brouht his hed, 2812  
 Sent foorth in scorn anon to Hispalee,  
 Which in Spaigne is a ful gret cite.
- Finally, all of Pompey's kindred were brought to destruction by Cæsar, whose renown increased. Thus bi processe al hooli the kynreede  
 Of Pompeius, for short conclusioun, 2816  
 Bi Cesar wern & bi his men in deede  
 Withoute mercy brouht to destruccioun.  
 Thus gan encrece the fame & the renoun  
 Of Iulius conquest on se & eek on londe, 2820  
 Whos mortal suerd ther myht[e] non withstonde.
- His power had been proved in Lybia, Spain, Italy, Germany, Lombardy and France. First in Libie, Spaigne and eek Itaille\*  
 Thexperience of his roial puissaunce,  
 In Germanye bi many strong bataille, 2824  
 His power preved, in Lumbardie & in Fraunce.  
 Brouhte alle thes kyngdames vndir thobeissaunce  
 Of [the] Romeyns: peised al this thyng & seyn  
 Touchyng his guerdoun, his labour was in veyn. 2828
- Returning to Rome, he put an end to the civil war and received the triumph, Toward Roome makyng his repair,  
 Of hym appesed cyuyl discenciouns,  
 Of throne imperial clymyng on the stair;  
 For the conquest of threttene regiouns, 2832  
 Of the tryumphe requered the guerdouns,  
 Which to recure his force [he] hath applied,  
 Al-be the Senat his request hath denied.

2804. tassaille B. 2811. To scape B.

2822. in Itaille B.

2825. Lumbardie] Germanye H, R 3, H 5 — in Lumbardie &]  
 ful often tyme J, ful oft times P.2827. al] as H. 2832. xiiij<sup>e</sup> B.

2834. recure] replye H.

2835. request] conquest H.

And his name mor to magnefie, 2836 and, hastening  
 To shewe the glorie\* of his hih noblesse, to the Capitol,  
 To the Capitoile faste he gan hym hie, issued his de-  
 As emperour his doomys ther to dresse. crees as em-  
 That day began with ioie & gret gladnesse; 2840 peror. That  
 The eue nothyng accordyng\* with the morwe: day began with  
 The entre glad; the eende trouble & sorwe. joy but ended  
 in sorrow.

Calipurnia, which that was his wiff, One night  
 Hadde a drem the same niht afforn, 2844 Calpurnia  
 Toknis shewed of the funeral striff, dreamt that  
 How that hir lord was likli to be lorn her lord would  
 Be conspiracy compassed & Isworn, die if he went  
 Yiff he that day, withoute auisement, 2848 to the Capitol  
 In the Capitoile sat in iugement. the next day.

She drempte, alas, as she lay & sleep[te], [p. 332] She dremt  
 That hir lord, thuruh girt with many a wounde, that her  
 Lay in hir lappe, & she the bodi kepte 2852 lord, pierced  
 Of womanheed, lik as she was bounde. wounds, lay in  
 But, o alas, to soth hir drem was founde! her lap. Alas,  
 The nexte morwe, no lenger maad delay, her dream came  
 Of his parodie was the fatal day. 2856 true!

A poore man callid Tongilius, A poor man  
 Which secreli the tresoun dede espie, named Tongilius  
 Leet write a lettre, took it Iulius, knew the  
 The caas declaryng of the conspiracie, 2860 treason, but  
 Which to reede Cesar list nat applie. Cæsar  
 But, o alas! ambitious negligence neglected his  
 Caused his mordre bi vnwar violence. warning,

Cesar sitting myd the consistorie, 2864 and, sitting in  
 In his estat[e] most imperiall, the midst of  
 Aftir many conquest & victorie, the consistory,  
 Fortune awaityng to yiuen hym a fall, was murdered  
 With boidekenys, percyng as an all, 2868 with bodkins.  
 He moordred was, with many mortal wounde.  
 Loo, how fals trust in worldli pompe is founde!

2837. gloire B, J.

2841. accordyng nothyng B.

2844. toforn H, R 3, befor J.

2868. bodkyns H, bodkynes R 3, boidekynes J, Boydkynns

H 5, Bodkins P.

2869. many a H.

## Lenvoye.

No tragedy is  
more woeful  
than the fall  
of Cæsar.

**T**HORUH al this book[e] rad ech tragedie,  
Afforn rehersid & put in remembrance, 2872  
Is non mor woful to my fantasie,  
Than is the fall of Cesar in substaunce,  
Which in his hiest imperial puissaunce  
Was, whil he wende haue be most glorious, 2876  
Moordred at Roome of Brutus Cassius.

He brought all  
countries to  
subjection, and  
yet he was  
murdered at  
Rome by  
Brutus Cassius.

This marcial prince ridyng thoruh Lumbardie,  
Ech contre yolde & brouht to obeissaunce;  
Passyng the Alpies rood thoruh Germanye, 2880  
To subiaccioun brouht the rewm of Fraunce,  
Gat Brutis Albioun bi long contynuaunce:  
To lustris passed, this manli Iulius  
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius. 2884

The conspiracy  
was hatched by  
the Senators,  
in spite of  
whom he had  
celebrated his  
triumph.

Among the Senat was the conspiracye  
Alle of assent & of oon accordaunce, —  
Whos tryumphe thei proudli gan denye;  
But maugre them was kept thobseruaunce, 2888  
His chaar of gold with steedis of plesaunce  
Conveied thoruh Roome, this prince [most] pompous,  
The moordre folwyng bi Brutus Cassius.

Reckon up his  
conquests and  
his chivalry,  
and compare  
them with  
worldly vari-  
ance!

Rekne his conquest, rekne up his cheualrie 2892  
With a countirpeis of worldli variaunce:  
Fortunys chaungis for his purpartie; —  
Weie al to-gidre, cast hem in ballaunce,  
Set to of Cesar the myscheeuable chaunce, 2896  
With his parodie sodeyn & envious, —  
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

Mars and  
Jupiter united  
to enhance his  
noblesse, yet  
he was mur-  
dered at Rome  
by Brutus  
Cassius.

Bookis alle and cronicles specefie,  
Bi influence of heuenli purueiaunce, 2900  
Mars and Iubiter ther fauour did applie  
With glade aspectis his noblesse to enhance:\*  
Mars gaf hym kniithod, Iubiter gouernaunce,  
Among princis hold oon the moste famous, — 2904  
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

2896. myscheuous H.  
2902. tenhaunce B, J, R 3.

Behold of Alisaundre the grete monarchie,  
 Which al the world had vndir obeissaunce,  
 Prowesse of Ector medlid *with* gentrie, 2908  
 Of Achilles malencolik vengauce, —  
 Rekne of echon the quaueryng assuraunce,  
 Among remembring the fyn of Iulius,  
 Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius. 2912

Princis considreth, in marcial policie  
 Is nouthtr trust[e], feith nor assuraunce:  
 Al stant in chaung with twynclng of an eye.  
 Vp toward heuene set your attendaunce, 2916  
 The world vnseur & al worldli plesaunce;  
 Lordship abit nat, record on Iulius  
 Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

[How Octavian / succeded next and how the  
 mordres of Iulius / deied at mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

A FFTIR the moordre of þis manli man, 2920  
 This noble prince, this famous\* emperour,  
 His worthi newew callid Octouyan  
 To regne in Roome was next his successour.  
 Which dide his deueer bi dilligent labour 2924  
 To punshe all tho, of nature as he ouhte,  
 Bi rihtful doom, that the moordre wrouhte.

Cheeff conspiratour was Brutus Cassius,  
 Which of this moordre made [al] the ordynaunce. 2928  
 Anothir Brut, surnamyd Decius,  
 Was oon also conspiryng the vengauce  
 Wrouht on Cesar; he aftir slayn in Fraunce. 2931  
 Heer men may seen, what coostis that men weende,  
 How moordre alwey requereth an euel eende.

Withyne the space almost of thre year [p. 333]  
 Destroied wern al the conspiratours  
 Be sodeyn deth; & summe stood in daungeer 2936  
 To be banshed or exiled as tretours.  
 And as it is cronicled bi auctours,  
 Space of thre year, reknid oon bi oon,  
 Deide at myscheff the moorderis euerichon. 2940

2921. famous] manli B.  
 2922. Octavian P. 2926. the] he H.  
 2937. banyssh H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 136 recto.

Behold the monarchy of Alexander, the chivalry of Hector, Achilles' vengeance, and the end of Cæsar!  
 Consider of each one the trembling security!  
 Princes, there is no trust in martial policy: all may change in the twinkling of an eye;  
 record on Julius, who was murdered at Rome by Brutus Cassius.

After Cæsar's death, his nephew Octavian succeeded to the empire, and his endeavour was to punish all those who had been guilty of the murder.  
 Brutus Cassius was chief conspirator, Decius another, slain afterwards in France. Murder always demands an evil end.

Within three years all the conspirators were either destroyed or exiled.

It is a sad thing to murder a prince. God will take vengeance. Yet there is but little security in high estate.

To moordre a prince, it is a pitous thyng.  
 God of his riht wil take therof vengauce;  
 Namli an emperour, so famous in ech thyng,  
 Which al the world[e] hadde in gouernaunce. 2944  
 Rekne his conquest digne off remembraunce,  
 Al peised in oon, Bochas ber[e]th wisse,  
 In hih estat is litil sekirnesse.

[How Tullius was too tymes exiled and atte last/  
 slayn by Pompylyus.]<sup>1</sup>

My author next made ready to write about Tullius, complaining that his barren style was inadequate to describe the life of so noble a rhetorician.

**M**YN auctour heer writ no long processe, 2948  
 Of Iulius deth compleynyng but a while;  
 To write of Tullie in hast he gan hym dresse,  
 Compendiousli his liff for to compile,  
 Compleynyng first, seith his bareyn stile 2952  
 Is insufficient to write, as men may seen,  
 Of so notable a rethoricien.

Prince of eloquence, he gathered up the flowers on Mt. Parnassus and was crowned with laurel by the nine Muses.

Laumpe and lanterne of Romeyn oratours,  
 Among hem callid prince of elloquence, 2956  
 On Pernaso he gadred up the flours,  
 This rethoricien most of excellence.  
 Whos meritis treuli to recompence,  
 The Muses nyne, me thouhte, as I took heed, 2960  
 A crowne of laureer set upon his hed.

Bochas hung his head and thought he had so little skill and language, that if he laboured all his life he could not properly describe Tully's merits.

Bochas astoned, gan of hymself conclude,  
 His look abashed, dul of his corage, 2964  
 Thouhte his termys & resouns wer to rude,  
 That he lakked kunnyng & langage,  
 Wherebi he sholde to his auantage,  
 Thuh he laboured wrytyng al his lyue,  
 Of Tullius the meritis to descryue. 2968

But he remembered that although sometimes the wind drives a cloud across the sun, it does not lessen its light, and that his dull writing would not eclipse the brightness of Tullius.

Wherof supprised, he kauhte a fantasie,  
 Withynne hymself remembryng anon riht,  
 Thuh it so falle sumtyme a cloudi skie  
 Be chacid with wynd affor the sunne briht, 2972  
 Yit in effect it lasseth nat his liht;  
 So Bochas dempte that his dul wrytyng  
 Eclipsed nat of Tullius the shynyng.

2953. sufficient H. 2958. excellence] Elloquence H.  
 2960. me] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 136 recto.

- With rud language a man may weel reporte 2976  
 The laude off tryumphes & conquestis merueilous,  
 Which thyng remembryng gretli gan comferte  
 The herte of Bochas; & to hymself spak thus:  
 "Too colours seyn that be contrarious, 2980  
 As whiht and blak; it may bee non othir,  
 Ech in his kynde sheweth mor for othir.
- In Phebus presence sterris lese her liht;  
 Cleer at mydday appeereth nat Lucyne;  
 The fame of Tullye whilom shon so briht,  
 Prince of fair speche, fadir of that doctrine,  
 Whos brihte bemys into this hour doth shyne:  
 Sothli," quod Bochas, "of whom whan I endite 2988  
 Myn hand I feele quakyng whan I write.
- But for to yiue folk occasioun,  
 Which in rethorik haue mor\* experience  
 Than haue I, & mor inspeccioun 2992  
 In the colours and craff[t] of elloquence,—  
 Them texcite to do ther dilligence,  
 Onto my wrytyng whan thei may attende,  
 Of compassioun my rudnesse to amende." 2996
- Vnto hymself[e] hauyng this langage,  
 Bochas to write gan his penne dresse,  
 Vndir support afforced his corage  
 To remembre the excellent noblesse 3000  
 Of this oratour, which *with* the suetnesse  
 Of his ditees, abrod as thei haue shynd,  
 Hath al this world most cleerli enlumyned.
- This Tullius, this singuler famous\* man,  
 First to remembre of his natyuyte,  
 Born at Aprinas, a cite of Tuscan,  
 Of blood roial descendid, who list see.  
 Grekissch bookis of old antiquite, 3008  
 Maad of rethorik and in ther vulgar songe,  
 He translaticid into Latyn tunge.
- In tendre youthe his contre he forsook  
 And fro Tuscan his passage he gan dresse;  
 Toward Roome the riht[e] weie he took, 3012  
 Entryng be cite, the renommed noblesse

It comforted him to think that all manner of things can be told in unadorned language, and that colours shew best by contrast.

Nevertheless he said, "I feel my hand tremble when I write about him.

"However, people who are more skilled than I will have opportunity to amend my rudeness out of compassion."

After he had said this to himself he began to write.

Tullius was born at Arpinum in Tuscany. He was of royal descent, and at first translated old Greek books into Latin.

In his youth he went to Rome; and his fame spread abroad like a sun.

2983. liht] siht H.

2991. mor] non B. 3004. famous singuler B.

3005. of his] his famous H.

Hid in his persone shewed the brihtnesse  
Of dyuers vertues, tyme whil he abood, 3016  
That lik a sonne his fame spradde abrod.

He was made a  
citizen for his  
virtues and  
chosen consul  
in the time of  
Catiline.

For his vertues made a citeseyne, [p. 334]  
The goode report of hym shon so cleer,  
Lik as he hadde be born a Romeyn, 3020  
In ther fauour his name was so entieer.  
Among hem chose for a consuleer, —  
Ageyn the cite, tyme of his consulat,  
Whan Catalyne was with hem at debat. 3024

Catiline, cruel  
and full of  
wrath, was  
always busy to  
injure Rome;

Bi the prudence of this Tullius  
And his manhod, reknid bothe Ifeere, —  
Catelyna, most cruel and irous,  
Froward of port & froward of his cheere, 3028  
Besi euere to fynde out the maneere,  
How he myhte be any tokne or signe  
Ageyn the cite couertli maligne.

and 689 years  
after the foun-  
dation of the  
city he con-  
spired with  
others against  
its franchises  
and freedoms,

Sixe hundrid yeer, fourscore told & nyne, 3032  
Reknid of Roome fro the fundacioun,  
This cruel tiraunt, this proude Catalyne,  
Made with othir a coniuracioun  
Ageyn fraunchises & fredam of the toun. 3036  
First discourid, as bookis telle can,  
In the parties & boundes of Tuscan.

purposing to  
bring Rome  
to ruin.

The purpos hooly of this Catalyne,  
Imagyned on fals[e] couetise, 3040  
Was to brynge Roome vnto ruyne.  
And therupon in many sondri wise  
Fond out weies, menys gan deuise,  
To his entent bi dilligent labour 3044  
In the cite gan gete hym gret fauour.

Tully was told  
about the con-  
spiracy, and by  
his prudence  
and the help of  
Antony it was  
broken and  
withdrawn.

But fynali his coniuracioun  
Discured was bi oon Quintius,  
Which was afforn[e] fals vnto the toun. 3048  
Tolde al the caas vnto Tullius,  
Bi whos prudence & werkyng merveilous,  
Bi help of Antoyne, that was his felawe,  
The coniuracioun was broken & withdrawe. 3052

3016. whil] whan H.

3027. Catilina P — most Irous H.

3036. Ageyn] geyn H.



Bi witt of Tullie al the coniuatours  
Espied wern and brouht onto myschaunce,  
Ther namys rad tofor the senatours,  
Of ther falsheed told al the gouernaunce,  
Manli ordeyned thoruh his purueiaunce.  
With al his peeple, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
Catilyna departid fro the toun.

3056 Through his ability all the conspirators were punished. Catiline left Rome

With Antonye\* the said[e] Catalyne  
Beside Pistoie hadde a gret bataile.  
Slayn in the feeld; he myht[e] nat declyne,  
For he abood whan the feeld gan faille.  
Poweer of oon litil may auaille,  
Namli whan falsheed, of malis & of pride  
Ageyn[es] trouthe dar the bront abide.

3060 and was slain in a battle with Antony near Pistoia.

Ther was another callid Lentulus  
Of his felawes, that namyd was Fabyne;  
The thridde of hem eek callid Cetegus, —  
Alle assentid & sworn to Catallyne,  
Stranglid in prisoun, at myscheef dide fyne.  
Cause Tullius dide execucioun,  
Tullyane was callid the prisoun.

3068 Three of his companions were strangled in prison; and the prison was afterwards called Tullian, after Tully, who had defeated the plot.

Thus koude he punshe tretours of the toun,  
Outraie ther enmyes, of manhod & prudence;  
Callid of ther cite governour & patrour,  
Sent from aboue to been ther diffence,  
Ther champioun, most digne of reuerence,  
Chose of ther goddis ther cite for to guie  
Bi too prerogatyues: knihthod & polycie.\*

3076 Thus he punished traitors to Rome. He was called patron and governor of the city.

Lik a sunne he dide hem enlumyne  
Bi hih prowessse of knihtli excellence;  
And thoruh the world his bemys dede shyne  
Of his rethorik & his elloquence,  
In which he hadde so gret experience.  
Bi circumstaunces that nothyng dede lakke,  
He transcendid Polityus & Grakke.

3084 He illumined the Romans like a sun; and the beams of his rhetoric and eloquence shone through the world.

Of oratours it is put in memorie,  
This Tullius, thoruh his hih renoun,  
Of all echon the honour & the glorie  
Was youe to hym, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>:

3088 He surpassed all orators and won the golden triumph of the House of Fame.

3060. Antonye B. 3063. faille] falle H. 3073. Tullianum P.  
3076. ther] þe H, the R 3. 3080. polycie] clergie B, J.  
3087. Plotius H, R 3, Plocius J, Plotius P.

- Surmountid all; & in conclusioun, 3092  
 The goldene trumphe of the Hous of Fame  
 Thoruh al the world[e] bleuh abrod his name.
- He knew the secrets of philosophy and studied in Athens, where he profited in all sciences. He knew secretis of philosophie,  
 Cam to Athenys\* to scoole for doctryne, 3096  
 Wher he profited so gretli in clergie  
 In al sciences heuenli and dyuyne,  
 That he was callid, as auctours determyne,  
 Among Romeyns, of verray dieu[e] riht, 3100  
 Of elloquence the lanterne & the liht.
- He pleaded two great causes in Rome before the senators. It is remembred among oratours, [p. 335]  
 How Tullius pleted causes tweyne  
 In the Romeyn court affor the senatours, 3104  
 The cause defendyng be langage souereyne  
 Of too accusid geyn hem that dede pleyne  
 On ther defaultis, them sauynge fro myscheef,  
 The court escapyng fro daunger & repreeff. 3108
- saving two accused, and spoke such beautiful Latin and dealt so wisely with his material that no man could deny what he said. Thes causes tweyne he pleted in Latyn,  
 With so excellent flouryng fair langage,  
 With suich resouns concluded at the fyn,  
 That he be wisdam kauhte the auantage 3112  
 In his mateeres *wit*h al the surplusage  
 That myhte auaille onto his partie:  
 What he saide ther koude no man denie.
- In Greece his reputation and authority were so great that he was compared to Plato, upon whose infant lips bees laid honey, a sign that he would be the source and well of rhetoric. Yet Tully was his equal. Among Grekis [at] Athenys the cite 3116  
 He was so gret of reputacioun,  
 So famous holde of auctori[t]e,  
 To be comparid bi ther oppynyoun  
 To the philisophre that callid was Platoun, 3120  
 To whos cradel bees dede abraide  
 And hony soote thei on his lippes laide.  
 A pronostik[e], lik as bookis tell,  
 Plato sholde bi famous excellence, 3124  
 Of rethorik be verray *sours* & well,  
 For his langage, merour off elloquence.  
 Yit the Grekis recorden in sentence,  
 How Tullius in parti and in all 3128  
 Was onto Plato in rethorik egall.

3096. to Athenys] Tathenys B, H 5.

3107. them] om. H. 3109. Thes] The H. 3116. at] om. H.

- Thoruh his langage this saide Tullius  
 Reconsiled bi his soote orisouns  
 To the lordshipe & grace of Iulius,  
 Princes, kynges of dyuers regiouns,  
 That suspect stood bi accusaciouns,  
 Because thei dide Iulius disobeie,  
 Wer enclnyed with Romeyns to Pompeie. 3132
- Through his orations he reconciled the princes and kynges of many regions to the lordship of Iulius.
- He coude appese bi his prudent langage  
 Folkis that stode at discencioun;  
 Bi crafft he hadde a special auantage,  
 Fauour synguleer in pronunciacioun,  
 In his demenyng gret prudence & resoun:  
 For the pronouncyng of maters in substaunce,  
 His thank resceyueh bi cheer & contenance. 3140
- He could soften people who were at enmity with one another,
- To a glad mateer longeth a glad cheer,  
 Men trete of wisdam with woordes of sadnesse,  
 Pleyntes requeere, aftir the mateer,  
 Greuous or mortal, a cheer of heuynesse,  
 Lik as the cause outhir the processe  
 Yiueth occasioun to hyndren or to speede, —  
 The doctryne in Tullius men may reede. 3144
- and knew well how to adapt his expression to the matter of which he treated.
- The name of Tulie was kouth in many place;  
 His elloquence in eueri lond was ryff;  
 His langage made hym stonde in grace  
 And be preferrid duryng al his lyff.  
 Married he was, and hadde a riht fair wiff,  
 Childre manye, seruauantis yonge & old;  
 And, as I fynde, he heeld a good houshold. 3152
- His reputation was known in every land. He had a wife, who was right fair, and many children and servants.
- De Officijs he wrot bookis thre,  
 De Amicitia, I fynde how he wrot oon,  
 Of Age another, notable for to see;  
 Of moral vertu thei tretede euerichon.  
 [And] as Vincent wrot ful yore agon  
 In his Merour callid Historiall,  
 Noubre of his bookis be ther remembrid all. 3160
- He wrote three books *de Officiis*, *Cato Major* (Vincent described all his writings in his *Speculum Historiale*),

3150. in] of H.

3151. Tullyus H.

3154. be] he H.

- the Dream of Scipio, two books of divination, on agriculture, vainglory, *de Republica*, twelve books of orations and many moral sayings.
- He wrot also the Drem of Scipioun,  
Of Rethoriques compiled bookis tweyne,  
And tweyne he wrot of dyuynacioun;  
Of tilthe of lond to write he dede his peyne, 3168  
A large book of glorie that is veyne,  
De Re publica; & as he seith hymselfe,  
Of his Orisouns he wrot bookis tuelue.
- But in spite of all, he was banished from Rome
- And of his dictes that callid be morall 3172  
Is remembred notabli in deede  
In the said Merour Historiall.  
And yit this saide Tullius, as I reede,  
Mid his worshepes stood alwey in dreede 3176  
Of Fortune; for in conclusioun,  
He be envie was ban[y]shed Roome toun.
- to Campania; and there, at the house of a friend,
- Beyng in exil, this famous Tullius,  
In Campanya at Atyne the cite 3180  
Resceyued he was of oon Plancius,  
A man that tyme of gret auctorite.  
And whil that he abood in that contre,  
Slepyng anih, the book makþ mencionioun, 3184  
How that he hadde a wonder visioun.
- he had a wonderful dream of how he met Gaius Marius in a desert. Marius inquired the cause of his trouble, and on learning what it was
- He thouhte thus, as he lay slepyng: [p. 336]  
In a desert and a gret wildirnesse  
Fyndyng no path, but to & fro erryng, 3188  
How he mette, clad in gret richesse,  
Gaius Marrius, a prince of hih\* noblesse,  
Axyng Tulli with sad contenaunce,  
What was cheef ground & cause of his greuaunce. 3192
- assigned a sergeant to convey him in all haste to his sepulture, where Tullius should receive tidings of his recall to Rome.
- Whan Tullius hadde hym the cause told  
Of his disese & his mortal wo,  
Marrius with his hand set on hym hold,  
To a sergaunt assigned hym riht tho, 3196  
And in al haste bad he sholde go,  
To conveie hym doon his besi cure  
In al haste possible to his sepulture,

3171. Orisouns] Oracions P.

3172. dictes] ditees H, dictes H, dities P, dites R 3, H 5.

3175. this] þe H.

3176. worshipp H. 3180. Ative H.

3181. Plantius P.

3190. hih] gret B, J, H 5, R 3, great P — Cayus P.

3198. doon his besi] douz bi his H.

- Wher he sholde haue tidynge of plesaunce 3200  
 Of his repeer into Roome toun,  
 Been allegid off his old greuaunce.  
 This was the eende of his auisseoun.  
 The nexte morwe, as maad is menciou, 3204  
 Ther was holde, to Tullius gret auail,  
 Tofor Iubiter in Roome a gret counsail
- Withyne the temple bilt bi Marrius:  
 The senatours accorded wer certeyn 3208  
 To reconcile this prudent Tullius,  
 Out of his exil to calle hym hom ageyn.  
 Aftir resceyued as lord & souereyn  
 Of elloquence, bassent of the Senat, 3212  
 Fulli restored vnto his first estat.
- This thing was doon whan that in Roome toun  
 The striff was grettest tween Cesar & Pompeie;  
 And for Tullius drouh hym to Catoun, 3216  
 With Pompeius Cesar to werreie  
 And of Iulius the parti disobeie,  
 Out of Roome Tullius dide hym hie,  
 Fledde with Pompeie into Thesalie. 3220
- Cesar aftir of his fre mocioun,  
 Whan that he stood hiest in his glorie,  
 Hym reconciled ageyn to\* Roome toun,  
 Vpon Pompeie accomplisshed the victorie. 3224  
 But Iulius slayn in the consistorie  
 Bi sexti senatours beyng of assent,  
 Tullius ageyn was into exil sent.
- And in a cite callid Faryman 3228  
 Tullius his exil dide endure;  
 For Antonyus was to hym enmy than,  
 Because that he, parcas of auenture,  
 Compiled hadde an invectiff scripture 3232  
 Ageyn Antoyne, rehersyng al the cas  
 Of his defautis & of Cleopatras.
- Thus of envie and [of] mortal hatreede,  
 His deth compassed bi Antonyus, 3236  
 And aftirward execut in deede  
 Bi procuryng of oon Pompillius; —

The next day a council was held in Rome in the temple built by Marius, and shortly afterwards Tully was restored to his former estate.

This was done during the struggle between Cesar and Pompey; and although Tullius had fled with Pompey to Thessaly,

Cesar became reconciled with him.

After Cesar's death he was again exiled; and Antony hated him and compassed his murder because he had exposed his relations, with Cleopatra.

Finally one Popilius went to Campania on the authority of Antony

3201. into] vn to H.

3223. to] into B. 2224, 25 are transposed, but corrected H.

3232. invectiff] Inuentive H, Inuentif J.

- Gat a commyssioun, the stori tellith thus,  
Of fals malice, & foorth anon wente he 3240  
Into Gayete of Campaigne\* a cite.
- and slew  
Tullius, al-  
though he had  
once saved him  
from the  
gallews.  
And bi the vertu of his commyssioun,  
Takyng of Antoyne licence & liberte,  
Cheeff rethoricien that euer was in the toun, 3244  
Among Romeyns to worshep the cite,  
Was slayn, alas, of hate and enmyte  
Bi Pompilius, roote of al falsheed, —  
Proffryng hymself to smyten of his hed. 3248
- Whoever saves  
a thief, when  
the rope is  
tied about his  
neck, will have  
an evil reward.  
Tullius afforn[e] hadde been his diffence  
Fro the galwes, & his deth eek let,  
Which hadde disserued for his gret offence  
To haue been hangid upon an hih gibet. 3252  
Who saueth a thief whan the rop is knet  
Aboute his nekke, as olde clerkis write,  
With sum fals tourn the bribour wil hym quite.
- Experience  
shews that  
a thief  
will always be  
ungrateful.  
Loo, heer the vice of ingratitude, 3256  
Bexperience brouht fulli to a preeff,  
Who in his herte tresoun doth include,  
Cast for good wil to do a man repreeff.  
What is the guerdoun for to saue a theeff? 3260  
Whan he is scapid, looke, ye shal fynde  
Of his nature euere to be vnkynde.
- This odious  
traitor Popilius  
smote off Tully's  
right hand  
after he was  
dead;  
This Popilius, tretour most odible,  
To shewe hymself fals, cruel and vengable, 3264  
Toward Tullie dide a thyng horrible:  
Whan he was ded, this bribour most coupable,  
Smet of his riht hand, to heere abhomynable,  
With which[e] hond, he lyuyng, on hym took 3268  
To write of vertues many [a] famous book.
- and his hand  
and head were  
afterwards set  
up on a stake,  
until the wind  
and weather  
wasted them.  
The hand, the hed of noble Tullius, — [p. 337]  
Which eueri man ouht of riht compleyne, —  
Wer take and brouht[e] bi Popilius, 3272  
Vpon a stake set up bothe tweyne,  
Ther tabide, wher it dide shyne or reyne,  
With wynd & wedir, til thei wer deffied,  
In tokne al fauour was to hym denied. 3276

3239. a] *om.* H.

3241. Gayete] Gaire J, Caiatte P — Compaigne B, J, compaygne H 5, Campaygne H, Campaynge R 3, Champayne P.

3255. bribour] labour H.

3263. Popilius] Pompelyne H, Pompilyn R 3.

3270. R begins again with this line.

¶ A chapitle ageyn [Iangelers and]<sup>1</sup> diffamers of  
Rethorique.

**B**OCHAS compleynng in his studie allone

The deth of Tullie and the woful fall,  
Gruchching in herte made a pitous mone,  
The folk rebukyng in especial,  
Which of nature be boistous & rurall,  
And hardi been (for thei no kunnyng haue)  
Craft of rethorik to hyndren and depraue.

Bochas, com-  
plaining the  
death of Tully,  
rebuked those  
people who are  
rude and  
tumultuous by  
nature and bold  
(for they have  
no skill them-  
selves) to decry  
the art of  
rhetoric.

3280

Clerkis olde dide gretli magnefie  
This noble science, that wer expert & wis,  
Callid it part of philosophie,  
And saide also in ther prudent auys,  
Ther be thre partes, as tresours of gret pris,  
Compiled in bookis & of old prouided,  
Into which philosophie is deuyded.

In the old  
days scholars  
called it a  
branch of  
philosophy.

3284

There are  
three branches  
of philosophy:

3288

The firste of hem callid is morall,  
Which directeth a man to goode thewes;  
And the secounde, callid naturall,  
Tellith the kynde of goode men & shrewes;  
And the thridde, rac[i]ounal, weel shewes  
What men shal uoide & what thing vndirfonge,  
And to that parti rethorik doth longe.

moral, natural  
and rational,  
and to  
rational  
rhetoric  
belongs.

3292

3296

Bi Tullius, as auctours determyne,  
Of his persone rehersyng in substaunce,  
Translatid was fro Greek into Latyne  
Crafft of rethorik; and for the habundaunce  
Of elloquence stuffed with plesaunce,  
All oratours remembrid, hym to-fore  
Was ther non lik, nor aftir hym yit bore.

The art of  
rhetoric was  
transferred  
from Greece to  
Rome by  
Tullius. No  
orator like him  
was ever born.

3300

3304

Bochas also seith in his writingis  
And preueth weel be resoun in sentence,  
To an oratour longeth foure thingis:  
First naturel wit, practik with science,  
Vertuous lyff, cheef ground of elloquence,  
Of port and maner that he be tretable;  
Thes menys had, myn auctour halt hym able.

Bochas says  
that an orator  
must have  
natural wit,  
broad know-  
ledge, a virtuous  
life and affa-  
bility.

3308

3280. The] tho H. 3283. and] or H.

3288. gret] om. H. 3290. deuyded] prouyded R.

3307. longeth] longe R.

<sup>1</sup> Supplied from MS. J. leaf 139 recto.

Bochas also demonstrates that every notable rhetorician must have five armours, which he calls the five banners of eloquence.

In his writyng and in his scriptures 3312  
 Bochas weel preueth, if mut needis been,  
 How that of riht ther longe fyue armures  
 To eueri notable rethoricien,  
 Set heer in ordre, who that list hem seen, 3316  
 Which he callith, rehersyng in sentence,  
 The fyue baneeres longyng to elloquence.

The first is Invention,

The firste off hem callid Inuencioun,  
 Bi which a man doth in his herte fynde 3320  
 A sikir grounde foundid on resoun,  
 With circumstaunces, that nouht be left behynde,  
 Fro poynt to poynt enprentid in his mynde  
 Touchyng the mateer, the substaunce & þe grete, 3324  
 Of which he caste notabli tentrete.

the second Disposition, which helps us avoid digressions;

Another armure, in ordre the secoude,  
 Of riht is callid Disposioun,  
 As of a mateer whan the ground is founde, 3328  
 That eueri thyng bi iust dyuysioun  
 Be void of al foreyn digressioun,  
 So disposid touchyng tyme & space,  
 Fro superfluite keepe his dewe place. 3332

the third is Elocution, the art of effective expression;

The thridde armure namyd in sentence  
 Is Ellocucioun, with woordes many or fewe,  
 Materes conceyued bi iust conuenyence,  
 Disposid in ordre couenably\* to shewe, — 3336  
 Lik a keruer that first doth tymbir hewe,  
 Squier\* & compas cast fetures & visage,  
 With keruyng tool makth [up] a fair image.

the fourth is Pronunciation, which is joined to execution,

Pronunciacioun is the fourth armure, 3340  
 Necessarie to eueri oratour,  
 In such caas whan craft onto nature  
 Iioyned is bi dilligent labour  
 With executioun, and that ther be fauour 3344  
 In declaryng, with eueri circumstaunce,  
 Folwyng the mateer in cheer & contenance.

whereby the orator conforms his mien and gestures to his matter;

An heuy mateer requereth an heuy cheer; [p. 338]  
 To a glad mateer longeth weel gladnesse; 3348  
 Men in pronouncyng mut folwe the mateer, —  
 Old oratours kan bern herof wisesse, —

3336. couenable B, R 3.  
 3342. craft is repeated R.  
 3350. herof] ther off R.

3338. Squiers B.  
 3339. toolis H.



- A furious compleynt vttrid in distresse:  
 This was the maner, as poetis do descryue, 3352  
 In his tragedies whan Senec was alyue.
- The fiffte armure callid Remembraunce,  
 With quik memorie\* be prouidence to see,  
 So auisili to grose up in substaunce 3356  
 Hooli his mateeris, that nouht forgetyn be,  
 Liste foryetilnesse dirke nat the liberte  
 Of cleer report, ech thing hadde in mynde,  
 That in pronouncyng nothing be left behynde. 3360
- Afforn prouided, so that foryetilnesse  
 Be non hyndrere to inuencioun,  
 And in procedyng no foreyn reklesnesse  
 Trouble nat the ordre of disposicioun. 3364  
 And for tacomplisshe al up with resoun,  
 That pronouncyng be cleer[e] remembraunce  
 Be weel fauoured with cheer & contenaunce.
- Thes said[e] thynges be inli necessarie 3368  
 To euery prudent notable oratour,  
 Nat to hasti nor ouer long to tarie,  
 But to conveie his processe be mesour;  
 In cheer accordyng stant al the fauour: 3372  
 For in pronouncyng, who lakketh cheer or\* face,  
 Of Tullius scoole stant ferr out of grace.
- ¶ Al erthli beestis be muet of nature,  
 Sauf onli man, which haueth auauntage 3376  
 Bi a prerogatiff about ech creature  
 To vttrre his conceit onli be langage.  
 The soule be grace repressith al outrage,  
 Namli whan resoun hath the souereynte 3380  
 To bridle passiouns of sensualite.
- Kynde onto man hath youen elloquence,  
 A thyng couenable in especial  
 Whan that it is conveied bi prudence, 3384  
 To talke of mateeris that be natural  
 And secrees hid aboute celestial, —  
 Doth entrete of sunne, moone & sterris  
 Thyinfluent poweer doun sent of pes & werris. 3388

3352. maner] mateer H.

3355. memoire B. 3366. be] with H.

3373. For] &amp; H — or] &amp; B. 3374. ferr] full H.

3376. haueth] hath H. 3386. secretis H.

3388. Thyinflunce R.

the fifth is  
 Memory, that  
 nothing may be  
 forgotten;

for forgetfulness  
 should not  
 hinder invention  
 or trouble the  
 order of dis-  
 position.

These things  
 are necessary  
 to every able  
 orator.

All earthly crea-  
 tures are dumb  
 by nature;  
 only man has  
 the power of  
 speech.

Nature has  
 given him  
 eloquence, a  
 convenient  
 thing when it  
 is prudently  
 managed.

Man only can  
talk about the  
universe and  
express his  
thoughts in  
words.

God of al this hath graunted knowleching  
Onli to man bi wisdam and resoun,  
And thoruh langage youe to hym shewyng,  
Outward to make declaracioun 3392  
Of the heuenli cours & sondri mocioun,  
Diuers chaunges, &, pleyntli to diffyne,  
The reuolucioun of the speeris nyne.

He can discuss  
the moving and  
mutations, ac-  
cord and discord  
of the four  
elements, the  
coming and  
departing of  
earthly things;

Men bi langage shewe out ther ententis, 3396  
The naturall meeuynge & mutaciouns,  
Accord & discord of the foure elementis,  
Kyndli variaunce of foure complecciouns,  
The generacioun\* & the corupciouns 3400  
Of erthli thynges, contrarie ech to other,  
Corrupcioun of oon engendryng to another.

and he is  
taught by  
language to  
be steadfast in  
virtue.

This the poweer & the precellence  
Youe vnto man, which is resonable, 3404  
That bi langage and bi elloquence  
A man is tauht in vertu to be stable, —  
Of soule eternal, of bodi corumpable,  
Tauht with his tunge whil he is alyue 3408  
Of his defautis how he shal hym shryue.

Bochas tells us  
that there is  
natural rhetoric  
learned in  
youth, and the  
art of eloquence  
to which we  
come only by  
great diligence.

Bochas eek tellith, touchyng rethorik,  
Ther been too maneres: oon is of nature,  
Lernyd in youthe, which doth oon spek[e] lik 3412  
As he heereth & lerneth bi scripture; —  
Crafft of rethorik youe to no creature  
Sauff to man, which bi gret dilligence  
Be studie kometh to crafft of elloquence. 3416

Language en-  
ables preachers  
to teach the  
people virtu-  
ously, and in-  
stills in folk  
the respect of  
holy church.

Crafft of langage and of prudent speche  
Causeth prechours bi spiritual doctryne  
Vertuousli the peeple for to teche,  
How thei shal lyue bi moral disciplyne. 3420  
Langage techeth men to plaunte vyne,  
Enfourmeth folk to worshepe hooli cherche,  
The artificeer treuli for to werche.

But there are  
some who say  
that God has  
more regard to  
our hearts than  
to our language.

Yit ther be summe that pleyntli preche and teche, 3424  
Haue of langage this oppynyoun:  
God ha[th] nat most reward onto speche,  
But to the herte & to thaffeccioun;

3400. generaciouns B.

3413. &] or R. 3416. to] bi R.

3426. nat] om. H — reward] rewardid H.

- Best can guerdone the inward entencioun 3428  
 Of eueri man, nat after the visage,  
 But lik the menyng of ther inward corage.  
 To vttre langage is gret dyuersite [p. 339]  
 Whan that men shewe theeffect of ther menyng, 3432  
 Be it of ioie or off aduersite,  
 Cheer for taccord therwith\* in vtt[e]ryng,  
 Now debonaire, sumwhile rebukyng,  
 And in rehersyng, lik cheer alwei tapplie, 3436  
 Be it of rudnesse, be it of curteisie.  
 Of discreicioun sette a difference  
 In his pronouncyng to perce or vndirmyne,  
 To drawe the iuge vnto his sentence 3440  
 Or to his purpos to make hym to enclyne,  
 Seen wher he be malencolik or benigne, —  
 Or his mateer be vttrid or vnclosid,\*  
 Considre afforn how that he is disposid. 3444  
 Peised al this thyng, the rethoricien,  
 With other thynges which appertene of riht  
 To craft of speche, he mut conueye & seen  
 Mateeris of substauce & mateeris that be liht, 3448  
 Dispose hymself tentretyn euery wiht  
 Lik to purpos & fyn of his mateere,  
 As for the tyme rethorik doth requeere.  
 As bexauple, myn auctour\* doth record, 3452  
 Men sette at werre, in herte ferr\* assonder,  
 The rethoricien to make hem for taccord  
 Mut seeke weies & menys heer & yonder,  
 Of old rancour tappese the boistous thonder, 3456  
 Be wise exaumpis & prouerbis pertynent  
 Tenduce the parties to been of oon assent.  
 A man also that stant in heuynesse,  
 Disespered and disconsolat, 3460  
 The rethoricien mut doon his besyennesse,  
 The ground considred & felt of his estat,  
 The cause serchid whi he stant desolat,  
 Which to reffourme be dilligent labour 3464  
 Is the trewe offis of eueri oratour.

3434. for taccord therwith] of accord therof B.  
 3443. vnclosid] enclosid B. 3444. that] *om.* H.  
 3445. the] bi R, J. 3446. apperteneth R.  
 3449. tentretyn] tentren H, tentrete J, P.  
 3452. As] A H — myn auctour] Rethorik B.  
 3453. werre] a werre R — ferr] be ferr B.

There is great variety in our means of expression, depending upon our feelings

and according with our intentions, as, for example, when we try to win over a judge.

Thus the rhetorician must prepare himself to treat all manner of subjects and in many different ways.

He must bring warring men to concord and allay the thunder of old rancour,

and he must also aid and comfort those who are despaired and disconsolate.

In old days  
the virtuous  
words of ora-  
tors appeased  
the wrath of  
tyrants,

Of rethoriciens whilom that wer old  
The sugrid langage & vertuou daliaunce  
Be goode exaumples & prouerbes that thei tolde, 3468  
Woordes pesible enbelissed with plesaunce,  
Appesid of tirauntes the rigerous vengauce,  
Sette aside ther furious sentence  
Bi vertu onli of prudent elloquence. 3472

but on the  
other hand  
men may often  
see fools and  
brainless people  
talking at  
random.

And in contrarie,\* pleyntli to conclude,  
Men seen alday bi cleer experience  
Folk vnauised, & hasti foolis rude,  
And braynles peeples, of wilful necligence, 3476  
Because thei wern bareyn of elloquence,  
Vttringe\* ther speche as nakid folk & bare,  
For lak of rethorik ther mateer to declare.

Just as purple  
belongs to  
kings and rich  
garments fret  
with precious  
stones, pleasant  
objects to the  
sight,

¶ Bi cleer exaumples, as purpil, who takþ heede, 3480  
Longeth to kynges, in stori men may fynde,  
With clothes of gold & riche velwet weede  
Fret with rubies and othir stonis Ynde,  
Saphirs, emeraudis, perlis of ther kynde, — 3484  
As alle thes thynges aproprid been of riht,  
Plesaunt obiectis to a manny's siht,

so is the  
speech of  
rhetoricians,  
like the song  
of musicians, a  
glad object to  
the hearing.

So the langage of rethoriciens  
Is a glad obiect to manny's audience, 3488  
With song mellodious of musiciens,\*  
Which doth gret counfort to euery hih presence.  
Bexaumples as\* Amphioun, with song & elloquence  
Bilte the wallis of Thebes the cite, 3492  
He hadde of rethorik so gret subtilite.

Amphion built  
the walls of  
Thebes with  
his eloquence  
and song, for  
men were so  
attracted that  
all the country  
came to help  
him.

In his langage ther was so gret plesaunce,  
Fyndyng therbi so inli gret proffit,  
That al the contre kam to his obeissaunce, 3496  
To heere hym speke thei hadde so gret delit;  
The peeples envirooun hadde such an appetit  
In his persone, in pes & in bataille:  
Heer men may seen what rethorik doth auaille! 3500

3472. vertu onli] þe vertu H.  
3473. contraire B.  
3478. Vttrid B.  
3485. As] om. H.  
3489. Musiciens B.  
3491. as] of B.

[How Sextus werreide Tryumvir, and of the deth of grete Antonye and Cleopatras.]<sup>1</sup>

FOLWYNG the ordre Bochas of his book,  
 With penne in hond[e], castyng up his eye,  
 Tofor hym cam pale of cheer & look  
 A myhti prince, sone onto Pompeye,  
 Callid Sextus, which as bookis seye,  
 Delited hym, with a gret naue  
 Lik a pirat to robben on the se.

Bochas, looking up, saw before him a mighty prince, Sextus, son of Pompey, who robbed on the sea like a pirate.

3504

To his fadir contrarie in such caas, —  
 For eueri pirat of custum he dede hate,  
 Vpon the se whos vsage alwey was  
 Ageyn[es] hem proudli to debate,  
 Pursued hem erli and eek late, —  
 Wher this Sextus, to his gret repreeff,  
 Was of\* the se a robbour and a theeff.

3508 He was very different from his father, who hated pirates;

3512

The sclaudre of hym\* gan to spreede ferre, [p. 340]  
 Reportid was to many ferr contre;  
 With Tryumvir\* this Sextus gan a werre, —  
 Which is an offis and a dignite  
 Bi the Romeyns commyttid onto thre  
 Notable estatis, chose for\* cheualrie,  
 Thempire al hool to gouerne & to guie.

and his ill fame was widespread. He began a war with the Triumvirate,

3516

3520

The firste of hem namyd Lepidus,  
 And the secounde callid Octouyan,  
 The thridde in noumbre was Antonyus,  
 Ageyn[s] which thre Sextus, this proude man,  
 Of surquedie a newe werre gan,  
 Afforn bi Iulius for his rebellioun  
 Banished for euere out of Roome toun.

Lepidus, Octavian and Mark Antony.

3524

3528

Triumvir of politik gouernaunce,  
 Weel auised afforn in ther resouns,  
 Tretyng for pes bi notable purueyaunce  
 With proude Sextus vndir condiciouns  
 Write & enact in ther conuenciouns, —  
 But anon afftir, list no while tarie,  
 He to his promys was froward & contrarie.

The Triumvirs first made peace with him under conditions, but Sextus was perverse

3532

3514. of] on B. 3515. hym] hem B.  
 3517. Tryumvir] tryumphir B — this] with H. 3520. for] of B.  
 3521. 2nd to] om. H. 3523. Octavian P (ibroughout).  
 3525. this] the R. 3527. bi] om. H. 3535. his] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 139 recto.

- and broke his agreement.  
Bochas, disgusted with his lack of virtue, did not care to magnify his name by writing about him.
- For his convict outraious falsnesse, 3536  
And on the se for his robberye,  
Bochas of hym writ no long processe,  
Hauyng disdeyn his name to magnefie;  
For he to vertu list nothing applie, — 3540  
The difference cause which [is] in thestat  
Atwixe knihthod & liff of a pirat.
- He associated with fugitives and men of evil life, and made one Moena captain of 40 of his ships.
- With fugityues, theuys and robbours 3544  
And men exiled out of Roome toun,  
Banished peepel, fals conspiratours,  
With othir convict of moordre & tresoun, —  
He took al such vndir proteccioun;  
And oon Moena, a cherl of his certeyn, 3548  
Of fourti shippes he made hym a capteyn.
- This churl allied himself with Octavian and came down against his lord;
- The said[e] cherl vnwarli tho began  
Folwe the nature of his condicioun,  
Allied hymself[e] with Octauyan 3552  
Ageyn his lord[e], bi ful fals tresoun;  
Witb al his naue and shippes he cam down,  
Spared nat to meete of verray pride  
With Menecrates, that was on Sextus side. 3556
- but as soon as the battle began, Octavius' ships were sunk by a storm, and Sextus fled in disaster.
- But also soone as the bataile gan  
And the parties togidre sholde gon,  
Alle the vessellis of Octauyan  
With sodeyn tempest wer drownid euerichon 3560  
Beside a castell bilt of lym & ston  
Callid Nauletum, wher yit to gret repreeff  
Sextus fledde & was brouht to myscheeff.
- He then went to Greece to fight Antony, but was taken and slain.
- Wente into Grece to make hym stronge ageyn 3564  
To holde a bataile with Antonyus,  
Take in his komyng bi strengthe of a capteyn  
Longyng to Antoyne, callid Furnyus,  
Whilom neuwe to Cesar Iulius: 3568  
And or duk Sextus myhte ferþer weende,  
He slay[e]n was & made ther an eende.
- One of the Triumvirs was Lepidus, who reconciled Antony with Octavian;
- Of Tryumvir in thempire, as I tolde,  
Ther was a capteyn callid Lepidus, 3572  
Which bi his offis lik as he was holde,  
Riht besi was, the book rehersith thus,

3546. &] & of R, J. 3549. a] om. H. P. 3553. bi] with R, J.  
3556. Menecratus P — on Sextus side] an homy side H.  
3562. repreeff] preeff R. 3563. was brouht] brouht was H.  
3568. Cesar] om. R. 3570. an] his R, P, H 5.

- To reconcile the proude Antonyus  
 To the grace of gret Octouyan, 3576  
 Ech thyng forgete wherof the werre gan.
- And to conclude shortli, who list see, and for a time  
 Fortune a while was to hym *gracious*, the three  
 Thempire al hool *gouernid* bi thes thre: governed the  
 3580 empire in peace.  
 Lordship of Affrik hadde Lepidus,  
 Bi which he wex proud & contrarious,  
 To hym assigned vndir *commissiouns*  
 Fulli the noubre of tuenti legiouns. 3584
- Wherof in herte he kauhte such a pride,  
 Causyng be processe his destruccioun.  
 Surquedie a while was his guide,  
 From his estat til he was falle doun; 3588  
 Namli whan he, of fals *presumpcioun*,  
 Took upon hym of malis to werreye  
 The said Octouyan, & gan hym disobeie.
- Whan Octouyan his malis dide see, 3592  
 That he gan wexe sodenli *contrarie*,  
 He threw hym doun from his dignite,  
 Cast hym in exil, list no lenger tarie.  
 Loo, how Fortune sodeynli *can varie*, 3596  
 To maken hym that hadde *gouernaunce*  
 Off al Affrik to comen to myschaunce!
- Another prince, Cesar Lucyus, [p. 341] Another prince,  
 Exiled was fro Roome the cite 3600 Cæsar Lucius,  
 Bi his vncl, the saide Antonyus, was exiled from  
 Of wilfulnesse & hasti cruelte; Rome by his  
 For in that tyme, as men may reede & see, uncle Antony  
 Contreued causes wer founde up\* of malis out of wil-  
 3604 Texile princis notable holde & wis. fulness.  
 Many notable  
 princes were  
 then exiled on  
 contrived  
 causes:
- Summe because thei heeld[e] with Cesar,  
 Other for Pompeie that heeld on that partie, 3608  
 Summe for ther good, afforn or thei wer war,  
 Summe for suspeciou*n*, summe for envie,  
 Summe for thei koude nat flatre nouter lie,  
 Summe for vertues, which was gret[e] routhe,  
 Because thei wern so stable in ther trouthe. 3612

3576. gret] om. R. 3579. *gracious*] contraryvs H.  
 3600. from R. 3603. For in] fro H. 3604. up] out B.  
 3610. nouter] nor H, J.

- Paulus Lucius was exiled for malice after the death of Antony and Cleopatra.
- In this trouble dreadfull & odious,  
As is rehersid in ordre ye may reede,  
The noble kniht, Paulus Lucyus,  
Exilid was of malis & hatreede, 3616  
Folwyng upon the grete horrible deede,  
The pitous deth & the hatful caas  
Of gret Antonye and Cleopatras.
- I shall not write their tragedy because Chaucer has already done so in his *Legende of Cupide*.
- The tragedie of these ilke tweyne 3620  
For me as now shal be set aside,  
Cause Chauceer, cheef poete of Breteyne,  
Seyng ther hertis koude nat deuyde,  
In his book, the Legende of Cupide, 3624  
Remembryng ther, as oon thei dide endure,  
So wer thei buryed in oon sepulture.
- It were presumption for me to write again a thing once said by Chaucer.
- Thyng onys said be labour of Chauceer  
Wer presumpcioun me to make\* ageyn, 3628  
Whos makyng was so notable & enter,  
Riht compendious and notable in certeyn.  
Which to reherse the labour wer but veyn,\*  
Bochas remembryng how Cleopatras 3632  
Caused Antonye\* that he destroyed was.
- As Bochas says, Cleopatra caused Antony's destruction. He fell in love with her, and as she desired to be empress, he made war on Octavian.
- Hir auarice was so importable,  
He supprised with hir gret fairnesse,  
Folwyng ther lustis foul & abhominable, 3636  
She desiryng to haue be emperesse;  
And he, alas, of froward wilfulnesse,  
To plesen hire, vnhappily began  
To werreye the grete Octouyan. 3640
- Froward ambition made him wish to reign alone in Rome.
- Froward ambicioun sette his herte affire  
To clymben up to the imperial see,  
To haue pocessioun of the hool empire,  
Took upon hym, yiff it wolde haue be, 3644  
To regne allone in Roome the cite,  
Cleopatras to fostren in hir pride,  
Title of Octauyan for to sette aside.
- First he fought on the sea and was put to flight. Despairing, he went home,
- With multitude of many legiouns, 3648  
As I haue told, ageyn Octauyan,  
To hym acrochid of dyuers regiouns  
Gret multitude of many manli man;

3613. dreadfull] hatful R.

3628. make] take B, H.

3631. Which] wher H — veyn] in veyn B, R, J.

3633. Antoine B.



First on the se to werreye he began, 3652  
 Wher he was first, maugre al his miht,  
 To his confusioun vnwarli put to fliht.

Dispeired, fledde hom to his contre, and, knowing  
 Knowyng no\* helpe nor mene to recure, 3656 himself, pierced  
 But to ences of his aduersite, heart with a  
 Whan that he sauh this woful auenture, sword,  
 Geyn Octouyan he myhte nat endure,  
 With a sharp suerd his daungeer to dyuerte 3660  
 Hymself he rooff vnwarli to the herte.

Of whos deth the queen Cleopatras whereupon  
 Took a sorwe verray importable; Cleopatra slew  
 Because ther was no recure in the caas, 3664 herself for sor-  
 Thouhte of his wo she wolde be partable, row, and after-  
 Whos fatal eende pitous & lamentable: wards both  
 Slouh eek hirsilf[e], loue so did hir raue; were buried in  
 Afftir thei bothe buryed in o graue. 3668 one grave.

3655. Dispeired R. 3656. no] non B.  
 3657. ences] thences H.

¶ *Finis libri Sexti.*

¶ *Incipit liber septimus.*



## BOOK VII

[Off Antonye son and heire to grete Antonye, and of  
Cesarius, Iulia, Agrippa, Cassius, and Galbus.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HIS stori eendid, last of þe sixte book, [p. 343] This story, the last of the sixth book, ended, Bochas leaned on a chest and fell asleep. But just as he began to take his rest, a great number of people appeared to him, 4

Bochas weri, thouhte for the beste,  
Of gret trauaile oppressed in his look,  
Fill in a slombre lenyng on a cheste,  
Fulli in purpos to haue\* take his reste.  
But euene as he sholde his reste haue take,  
Cam a gret pres & made hym to a-wake.

¶ First of that felashipe cam the sone & heir 8  
Of Antonye, with blood spreynt al his weede,  
Callid eek Antonye,\* falle in gret dispeir  
Cause Octoyuan bar to hym hatreede,  
Whos suerde he fledde, quakyng in his dreede, 12  
To an old temple socour for to haue,  
Trustyng fro deth the\* place sholde hym saue.

In that temple Cesar was deified,  
Of whom be Romeyns set up a gret image; 16  
But whan he sauh [that] he was espied,  
He ran to Iulius hih upon the stage,  
Gan hym tenbrace in his pitous rage, —  
He, rent away be sodeyn violence, 20  
Vnwarli slayn; ther geyned no diffence.

¶ Next in ordre cam Cesarius,  
Of whom ther fill a wonder pitous caas,  
Whilom begete of Cesar Iulius 24  
Vpon the yonge faire Cleopatras,  
Slayn in his youthe, thus writeth Bochas,  
As Octouyan dide hymself assigne,  
For he geyn Romeyns sholde nat maligne. 28

where Cæsar was deified, as he embraced Cæsar's image.

Next came Cæsarius, son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra. He too was slain in his youth by Octavian.

1. vj<sup>te</sup> B. 4. in] on H — a] his R, P.  
5. to haue] taue B — to haue take his] for to take a H.  
7. &] om. H. 8. Phelishippe R.  
10. Antonye] Antoyne B — disesper R. 11. to] vn to H.  
14. the] that B. 23. pitous] om. H.  
28. geyn Romeyns sholde] ageyn Romayns did H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 140 recto.

Julia, Octavian's daughter, began, howling and crying, to tell Bochas her grievous complaint; for she was exiled by her father in punishment of her lechery, and she died in poverty.

¶ Folwyng in ordre, Iulia began  
 Hir greuouſ compleynt to Bochas ſpecefe,  
 Whilom douhtir to grete Octouyan,  
 With weepyng eyen gan to houle & crie, 32  
 Which bi hir fadir to punſhe hir lecherie  
 Exilid was out of hir contre,  
 For lak of ſocour deide in pouerte.

Her ſon Agrippa, who ſpent his time in ſlumber and idleneſſe, was allowed to die in miſchief by Octavian.

¶ Hir ſone Agrippa, yong & tendre of age, 36  
 Born off hih blood[e], Bochas doth expreſſe,  
 Cam next in ordre, pale of his viſage,  
 Which ſpent his tyme in ſlombre & idilneſſe,  
 Froward to vertu; & for his wrechidneſſe 40  
 Octovyan, which was gret[e] routhe,  
 Suffrid hym deie at myſcheeff for his ſlouthe.

After Agrippa came Caſſius of Parma, a manly knight, a poet and friend of Mark Antony.

¶ Afftir Agrippa cam forth anon riht 44  
 Caſſius of Parme, a famous gret contre,  
 Which in Itaille was holde a manli knyht,  
 With Marc Antonye\* weel cheriſſhed & ſecre,  
 Bood in his court, & therwithal parde 48  
 Gretli allowed, firſt for his cheualrie,  
 And for his notable famous poiſye.

He was accuſed to Octavian for having aſſented to the death of Cæſar,

And therwithal he hadde in exiſtence  
 A riht gret name & ſtood in gret fauour  
 For his knihthod & for his hih prudence. 52  
 Afftir accuſid vnto the emperour  
 Octouyan for a coniuatour,  
 He ſholde haue bee of froward falſ entent  
 To Iulius deth fulli of\* aſſent. 56

for which Octavian had him taken and offered up in ſacrifice to Iulius' image.

For which be biddyng of Octouyan  
 Take he was, beyng but yong of age;  
 And as myn auctour weel remembre\* can,  
 Brouht tofor Iulius hih upon a ſtage, 60  
 Ther offrid up onto his ymage  
 Be cruel deth, the ſtori tellith thus,  
 For the falſ moordre of Ceſar Iulius.

32. eyen] *om.* R, J.

33. hir] his H.

44. Parma P.

46. Antonye B.

59. remembre] reherſe B.

¶ Aftir the deth of saide Cassius,  
 Another *cam* of Roome the cite,  
 Which, as I reede, callid was Galbus,  
 Of a pretour hauyng the dignite;  
 And for suspeciou<sup>n</sup> slay[e]n eek was he,  
 His eyen first out of his hed wer rent,  
 For Iulius deth than into exil sent.  
 Toward his exil bi *brigauntes* he was slayn.  
 And aftir that, withyne a litil while,  
 Of his labour nouth<sup>r</sup> glad nor fayn,  
*Bochas* began to direct his stile  
 To gret Herodes, breefli to *compile*  
 His greuous fall & hooli the maneere  
 To sette in ordre heer next, as ye shal heere.

64 Galbus, a prætor, was slain by brigands after his eyes had been torn out. He was exiled on suspicion of aiding in Cæsar's death.

72 Bochas next turned to Herod the Great.

76

[How the tiraunt herodes slouh wiff and children  
 and deied atte mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

REMEMBRYNG first in Iurie he was kyng,  
 Antipater his fadir, who list see,  
 In Arabia myhtili regnyng  
 Ouir the prouynce callid Ydumee.  
 This same Herodes, gard[e]yn of Gallile,  
 Ordeyned was, [first] for his hih prudence,  
 And for his notable knihtli excellence.  
 Famous in manhod, famous of\* his lyne,  
 Famous also bi procreacioun,  
 I reede also he hadde wyues nyne;  
 And among alle, as maad is menciou<sup>n</sup>,  
 To his plesaunce and his oppynyoun,  
 Maister of stories reherseth ther was oon  
*Mariannes*, fairest of euerichon.  
 Bi whom she hadde worthi sones tweyne,  
*Alisaundre* and *Aristobolus*.  
 But for his sustir\* dide at hir disdeyne,  
 Callid *Saloma*, the stori tellith thus,  
 He vnto hir wex suspecious,  
 Because she was accusid of envie  
 Bi *Saloma* touchyng auoutrie.

80

84

[p. 344]

88

92

96

He was king in Jewry, son of Antipater, and for his knighthood made guardian of Gallilee.

A famous man, he had nine wives. Mariannes was fairest of them all.

She had two sons by him, Alexander and Aristobolus; but because his sister Saloma disdained at her and accused her of adultery, Herod became suspicious and slew her.

64. saide] the sayde R.

66. reede] tolde H. 74. began] gan H. 82. garden H.

85. of] in B, H. 88. among] mong R.

93. Aristobolus] Aristobus R, Aristolus J, Aristobolus H.

94. his sustir] hir sustir B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 140 verso.

Afterwards he greatly regretted her death.

Ageyn[e]s hire of rancour sodenli  
He gan of herte greuouusli disdeyne; 100  
With rigerous suerd he slouh hir furiousli.  
But as the stori doth vs acertejne,  
He for hir deth felt aftirward gret peyne,  
Euere whan it cam to his remembraunce, 104  
Hir port, hir cheer, hir womanli plesaunce.

That is what follows when a prince is hasty to believe every tale he hears. For sorrow Herod fell into melancholia

Loo, what it is a prince to be hasti,  
To eueri tale of rancour to assente,  
And, counsailles, proceede wilfulli 108  
To execucioun, of froward fals entente;  
For Herodes so sore dede hym\* repente  
That he for thouht[e] fill into anoye  
Of hertli sorwe & malencolie. 112

and, troubled with fits of fury and bad dreams, was lunatic once a month.

Reste hadde he non novther day nor niht,  
Troublid with furye that he wex frentik,  
With dremys vexid & many an vnkouth siht; 116  
Of cheer nor colour to no man he was lik,  
And eueri moneth onys lunatik.  
A gret[e] while he hadde this woful lyff  
For sorwe onli he hadde slayn his wiff.

But he was made king of Judæa by Antony and Octavian,

And as the stori weel reherse can, 120  
In the Capitoile mid Roome the cite,  
Bi Antonye and bi Octouyan  
He crownid was & maad kyng of Iude,  
Bi the Senat maad theron a decre, 124  
And registred that he and his kynreede  
Sholde in that lond lynealli proceede.

although a foreigner and a usurper. This was at the time of the birth of Christ Jesus.

In Roome was maad the\* confirmacioun  
To this Herodes, bookis specefie, 128  
Beyng a foreyn the translacioun  
Was maad of Iuda & of Iuerye,  
Sceptre, crowne, with al the regalie  
Bi hym vsurpid, as ye haue herd toforne, 132  
Vpon the tyme whan Crist Iesus was born.

103. aftirward] *om.* R.

109. entente] *om.* R.

110. so sore dede hym] dede hym so sore B — dede hym] he did R, J, he dyd P.

113. nor] *ne* H, J. 116. no] *om.* H. 117. onys] he wex R.

119. he] *pat* he H.

127. the] a B. 133. Crist] cast R.

- This same Herodes bi procuracioun  
Of Antonye did also occupie,  
Bi Augustus plener commyssioun  
The grete estat[e] callid Tetrarchie  
In too kyngdames, *with* al the regalie:  
Of Traconytides, Iturye eek also,  
Bi the Romeyns maad lord of bothe too.
- Maister of stories reherseth of *hym* thus:  
For comendacioun in especiall  
In Ascalon he bilt a statli hous  
Of riht gret cost, a paleis ful roiall,  
Was non so riche, for to reknyn all.  
Aftir which, myn auctour doth so write,  
He callid was Herode Ascolonyte.
- This same Herodes, cruel of nature,  
Of cheer & port passyng ambicious,  
Ay to be uengid dide his besi cure  
On al that wern to hym contrarious.  
His wyues brothir Aristobolus,  
In Iherusalem cheeff bisshop, as I reede,  
Falsli he slouh of malis & hatreede.
- Vniustli regnid, born heuy thoruh his reum,  
His herte fret & kankrid with envie.  
Another bisshop in Iherusalem,  
Callid Hircanvs, myn auctour list nat lie,  
This same Herodes in his malencolie  
Slouh hym vnwarli be rancour ful vengable,  
Sitting at dyneer at his owne table.
- Ther was no *man* of corage mor cruell  
Nor mor desirous to be magnified;  
To make his name also perpetuell  
Foure statli cites he hath edefied,  
Of which the names been heer specefied:  
Cesaria, Sebasten, cites souereyne,  
Antipadra, Cipre, the othir tweyne.
- He hadde also a fals condicioun:  
He truste[d] non that was of his kynreede,  
His sonis tweyne hadde in suspecioun,  
Ther purpos was to slen hym of hatreede,  
Whan he wer ded[e] hopyng to succede.

Herod also occupied the estate of Tetrarch.

136

140

144

148

152

156

160

164

168

[p. 345]

172

He built a stately palace in Ascalon, which Bochas thought was to his credit.

But he was cruel and ambitious, and slew his wife's brother Aristobolus, Bishop of Jerusalem, out of hatred.

He reigned unjustly and killed another bishop named Hircanus as he sat at dinner at his own table.

No man was ever more desirous of fame. To perpetuate his name he built four stately cities.

He also had the evil habit of not trusting his own family, and suspecting his two sons made them to be slain without cause.

149. port & cheer R. 156. kankrid] cancrik H.  
158. Hircamvs H. 168. Antipãtra and Cipre P.

And causeles, as fadir most vnkynde,  
Made hem be slayn, in stori thus I fynde.

He was deceitful and a tyrant; and when the three magi came to Jerusalem to worship Jesus, whom they called king,

In al his werkyng he was founde double, 176  
A gret[e] tiraunt holde thoruh his rewme,  
Neuer thyng so gretli dede him\* trouble,  
As whan thre kynges kam to Iherusalem,  
Iesus to seeke, that was [born] in Bethlem, 180  
Boldli affermyng, cause of ther komyng  
Was to worshepe that blissid yonge king.

he imagined that a child had been born to deprive him of his realm,

The which[e] thyng whan he did aduertise, 184  
Prophecies remembryng & writyngis,  
Withynne hymselff a mene he gan devise  
First to destroye thes hooli famous kynges;  
Namli, whan he knew of ther offrynges,  
Imagynyng, gan suppose blyue 188  
The child was born that sholde hym depryue,

and, falling into a rage, slew all the infants of Betblehem.

Newli descendid from Daudid doun be lyne, —  
Cast almost Herodes in a rage;  
Of cursid herte gan frowardli maligne, 192  
Lik a tiraunt of venymous outrage  
Slouh al the childre *witbynne* too yeer age  
Aboute Bethlem a ful large space;  
He spared non for fauour nor for grace. 196

One of his own children, out at nurse, was slain by his knights with the others, probably out of vengeance.

On of his childre beyng at norcerye,  
As the stori put in remembraunce,  
Of auenture or thei koude it espie  
His knihtes slouh; I trowe it was vengauce. 200  
Ech tiraunt gladli eendith *witb* myschaunce,  
And so must he that wex ageyn Crist wood,  
Which for his sake shadde innocentes blood.

Altogether 144,000 children were put to death for Christ's sake.

The noumbre of childre that wer slayn in deede 204  
Aboute Bethlem & in tho parties,  
An hundrid fourti four thousand, as I reede,  
Too yeer of age souht out be espies\*  
Of Herodes; & for the prophecies 208  
Of Cristes berthe menciou[n] did[e] make,  
Thei wer echon slay[e]n for his sake.

176. werkyng] werkes H. 178. him] hem B.  
180. Bethlem] bedlem R, Bedleme H, Bethleme J.  
195. Bethleem R, P, Bedlem H, R 3, Bethelam J.  
198. stori] om. R. 206. fourti] forty & H. 207. bespies B.



- Fro that day forth, as maad is mencioun,  
 He fill in many vnkouth malladie; 212  
 His flessch gan turne to corrupcioun,  
 Fret with wermys upon ech partie,  
 Which hym assailed bi gret tormentrie:  
 His leggis suell[e], corbid blak gan shyne; 216  
 Wher vengauunce werkith, a-dieu al medecyne.
- Of his seeknesse the stench was so horrible,  
 Tawaite on hym no man myhte abide;  
 Vnto hymself his careyn wex odible, 220  
 So sore he was troublid on ech side.  
 Lechis for hym did a bath prouyde,  
 But al for nouht; in such myscheeff he stood,  
 Of greuous constreynt he sodenli wex wood. 224
- In tokne he was weri of his liff,  
 So importable was his mortal peyne,  
 To pare an appil he axed a sharp knyff, —  
 His malladie did hym so constreyne, — 228  
 Fulli in purpos to kutte his herte in tweyne.  
 The knyff he rauhte, leiser whan he fond; —  
 Oon stood beside, \* bakward drouh his hond.
- For peyne vnnethe his wynd he myhte drawe, 232  
 Gaff al his freendis in comaundement  
 Bi a decre & a furious lawe,  
 That al the worthi of parties adiacent,  
 Which that wer fayn or glad in ther entent 236  
 Of his deth, he, void of al pite,  
 The same day thei sholde slay[e]n bee.
- This cursid wrech, this odious caitiff,  
 I reede of non stood ferther out of grace, 240  
 In sorwe & myscheeff eendid hath his liff.  
 Ech man was glad[e] whan he shold[e] pace.  
 And for his stori doth this book difface  
 With woful clauses of hym whan I write, 244  
 Therfor I caste no mor of hym\* tendite.
- From that day  
 Herod fell into  
 a strange ill-  
 ness; his flesh  
 corrupted and  
 was tormented  
 with worms;  
 his legs swelled  
 and bent and  
 turned black.
- His odour was  
 so awful that  
 no man could  
 wait on him,  
 and a bath  
 prepared by his  
 physicians did  
 him no good.
- Unable to  
 stand it any  
 longer, he went  
 mad, and asking  
 for a knife  
 to pare an  
 apple tried to  
 kill himself.
- He could  
 hardly draw in  
 his breath for  
 pain, and in his  
 fury ordered  
 all the worthies  
 of the country,  
 who were glad  
 of his sickness,  
 to be slain  
 on the day of  
 his death.
- Finally this  
 cursed wretch  
 came to an  
 end. No one  
 ever stood  
 farther out of  
 grace. His  
 story disfigures  
 this book.

¶ **Explicit.**

215. Which] with R. 216. blak] bak R.  
 219. Tawaite] to waite H, to wait R 3.  
 225. was] wex H. 226. inportable R. 229. 2nd in] on H.  
 231. beside] behynde B.  
 245. no mor of hym] of hym no mor B.

## [Lenvoye.]

Herod, who slew his wife and children and the infants of Bethlehem and frowardly shewed malice to Jesus, ended miserably.

OFF Herodes the vnwar cursid fall, [p. 346]  
 The lyff vngracious of hym & his kinreede,  
 Euere vengable in his estat roiall, 248  
 His wiff, his childre slouh of old hatreede;  
 Innocentis he made in Bethlem bleede,  
 Regnyng in Iuda, born of a foreyn lyne,  
 The firste tiraunt (ye may the Bible reede) 252  
 Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

His sword of vengeance was always ready whet to shed innocent blood.

His suerd of rigour, cruell & mortall,  
 Ay reedi whet to do vengauunce in deede,  
 Hasti, fumous with furies infernall 256  
 Of wilful malis innocent blood to sheede.  
 Dide execucioun also in womanheede,  
 Slouh his allies, which was a cursid signe, —  
 Was the firste cause he stode in dreede, — 260  
 Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

He would have no one his equal to succeed him, and as he was but an alien, he especially dreaded Jesus, who was of the line of Jesse.

He wolde that non wer to hym egall  
 That day alyue in Israel to succede;  
 The berthē of Crist dradde in especiall, 264  
 Cause fro Iesse his lyne gan floure & seede.  
 He but a foreyn, cam in be fraude & meede,  
 Withoute title, to that estat vndigne,  
 The firste also, who list take heede, 268  
 Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

Noble Princes, do not oppres your people; remember the end of Herod, who maligned against Christ.

Noble Pryncis, that gouerne all  
 This large world[e] bothe in lengthe & breede,  
 Whan ye sit hiest in your roial stall, 272  
 Doth nat the peeple oppresse nor ouerleede.  
 Vpon Herodes remembreth, as ye reede,  
 In what myscheeff that tiraunt dide fyne,  
 To shewe that non shal in his purpos speede, 276  
 Which ageyn Crist doth frowardli maligne.

[Off Antipas exilid bi Octavian and of Achelaus son of herodes the secounde.]<sup>1</sup>

Herod Antipas succeeded Herod the Great; but as he was exiled by Octavian

COMPENDIOUSLI as ye haue herd þe fall  
 Of Herodes remembrid be Bochas,  
 How bi his testament set in especiall 280  
 To succede was Herode Antipas;

246. cursid vnwar H. 255. whet] wher R.  
 256. fumous] furious H. 265. gan] did H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 141 verso.

In hast exilid, of hym this was the caas,  
 Bi Octovian to Vyenne, as I reede,  
 Archelaus ordeyned to succede, 284

Sone of Herodes callid the secounde,  
 Which in effect took pecessioun,  
 In Iherusalem regned, as it is founde,  
 Of whom myn auctour, for short conclusioun, 288  
 Maketh in his book but smal mencioniun:  
 Hym and his brothir set sodenli aside; —  
 Of them to write no lenger list abide.

Sauff that he writ how forseid Antipas 292  
 At Vyenne, a myhti gret cite,  
 In [his] exil soone aftir slay[e]n was.  
 Archelaus, succedyng in Iudee,  
 With Herodias, the stori who list see, 296  
 Bi Agrippa to Tiberie accusid,  
 Of certeyn crymes koude nat been excusid.

A certeyn tyme comaundid to prisoun,  
 Of themperour koude neuer gete grace; 300  
 Ban[y]shed hym [ferr] from his regeoun  
 Into Spayne for a certeyn space.  
 And his worshepe breeffli to difface,  
 Fortune causid to his fynal repreff, 304  
 He deide ther in pouert & myscheeff.

The fatal eende rehersed of thes tweyne,  
 In what distresse that thei dide fyne,  
 Myn auctour aftir gan his penne ordeyne 308  
 To write the caas be many a woful lyne,  
 Vpon the striff atween[e] Messalyne  
 And othir tweyne stondyng bi hir side,  
 Tofor Iohn Bochas how thei dide chide. 312

Tofor Bochas thei cam al thre to pleyne,  
 Messalyne, wiff onto Claudius,  
 Ageyn[e]s whom ther wer othir tweyne,  
 Calligula and Tiberius, 316  
 In whos tyme was slay[e]n Crist Ihesus.  
 Touchyng debat that was among thes thre,  
 Suende the processe, heer folwyng ye shal see.

and set aside,  
 together with  
 his brother, in  
 favour of  
 Archelaus,

my author says  
 little about  
 him, except  
 that he was  
 slain during  
 his exile.  
 Archelaus,  
 accused by  
 Agrippa to  
 Tiberius,

was sent to  
 prison and  
 died in  
 poverty in  
 Spain.

Bochas next  
 turned his  
 pen to the  
 unseemly  
 quarrel bet-  
 ween Messa-  
 lina, wife of  
 Claudius,

and Caligula  
 and Tiberius,  
 who upbraided  
 one another in  
 his presence.

282. this] thus H.      285. secounde] secounde in deede H, R 3.  
 287. regned] regnyng H — it is founde] I reede H, R 3, R, J,  
           H 5, I rede P.  
 296. who list the story R, J.  
 311. hir] his H.      319. Suende] sueng H, Suyd H 5, Suinge P.

[Off the striff / betwene, Calligula, Tiberius & messalyne.]<sup>1</sup>

Tiberius and Caligula stood angrily before Bochas, with Messalina between them.

**T**HIS emperesse namyd Messalyne, 320  
As I haue told, was wif to Claudius,

Successour, as bookis determyne,

To Calligula callid Gayus.

And, as I fynde, that Tiberius 324

With Calligula, bothe wood for teene,

Stood affor Bochas, & Messalyne atweene,

Caligula first spoke, and he said to Messalina, without respect or shame,

Meetyng al thre with furious look & cheere. [p. 347]

Gayus Calligula, callid be his name, 328

Gan first reherse, anon as ye shal heere,

Withoute reuerence or any maner shame,

With an exordie to diffame,

Bochas present, felli gan abraide 332

To Messalyne, & euene thus he saide:

"You defamed, adulterous woman, what are you doing here in your mourning garments? I suppose you have come to visit the five most infamous women who ever lived.

¶ "Thou sclaudrid woman, noised in lecherie

Thoruh al the world, as folk thi name atwite,

And reportid for thyn auoutrie, 336

What dost thou heer in thi murnyng habite?

I trowe thou komest of purpos to visite

In this place thunhappi women fyve,

Touchyng disclaundre that euer wern alyue. 340

"As a token, one of them, Æmilia, was taken in adultery and divorced by her husband.

The firste of hem callid Amylia,

And Lepida was named\* the secounde,

Lyuia, Plaucia, & the fiste Elia,

Diffamed echon in deede, as it was founde. 344

In tokne wheroff the lecherye to confounde

Off Emylia, in auoutry take,

Was bi the lawe of hir lord forsake.

"It is well known that you murdered Drusus; nor are you any better than Claudia, who also was thrown out by her lord for adultery.

Bi the whilom was knowe that Drusus 348

Istranglid was and moordred be poison;

Lik to Claudia, douhtir of Claudius,

Which bi hir lord, the book makth mencioum,

Was thrown out, to hir confusioun, 352

For hir defaultis founde in auoutrie

Sclaudrid for euere; ther was no remedie.

328. Gayus] geyn H. 331. exordie] Exody H.

333. Messaline P. 334. noised in] namyd with H.

341. Emilia R, P, Emylia H. 343. Elia] Helya H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 142 recto.

Thou koudest whilom mak thi lord to slepe,  
*With* certeyn drynkis to cast hym in a reraige, 356  
 Bi which he was maad his bed to keepe,  
 To gete leiseer in thi flouryng age,  
 For to mysuse of fals lust thyn outrage,  
 Anihter tyme took upon a weede, 360  
 At the bordel dist amys for meede.

"You knew how to drug your husband and make him sleep; while you went to the brothel and debauched yourself for money."

Thyn appetit was verray vnstaunchable;  
 It is a shame to write it or expresse.  
 Thyn hatful lyff was so abhominable, — 364  
 Tiberi and I can bern heerof witesse."  
 And with that woord anon she gan hir dresse,  
 Whan she had herd[e] al ther fel langage,  
 Gaff hem this ansuere *with* a sad visage: 368

"It is shameful to write about your insatiable lust and your hateful, abominable life. Tiberius and I can bear witness to it."

¶ "Certis," quod she, "I koude neuer keepe  
 To saue my-silff, a woful creature, —  
 I haue gret cause to compleyne & weepe  
 My sclaudrous lyff, which I may nat recure. 372  
 But I suppose I hadde it of nature  
 To be such oon; for be daies olde  
 An astronomyen so my fadir tolde,

"It is true," she replied, "I have good reason to weep over my scandalous life, but it was nature's fault; for when I was born an astronomer

At my berth taking the ascendent, 376  
 Tolde longe afforn of my mys-gouernaunce:  
 The sunne, the moone toward thorient  
 Wer in the signe that bereth the ballaunce; —  
 And saide also, mor for assuraunce, 380  
 The same signe hadde be descripcioun  
 His\* foot in Virgyne, armyes in the Scorpioun.

told my father that the sun and moon were in Libra, and that Libra's foot was in the Virgin and his arms in Scorpio.

Amyd the heuene was Venus exaltat,  
*With* Mars conioyned, þe book makth mencion; 384  
 And Iubiter was also infortunat  
 To my saide disposicioun,  
*Withynne* the Fissh heeld tho his mansioun:  
 Thus be the lordship pley[n]li of Venus 388  
 I was disposed for to be lecherous."

Venus was in a position of greatest influence, and, as the book says, in conjunction with Mars; and Jupiter too, was unfavourable to my disposition, and had his mansion in the Fish. Thus it is plain that Venus disposed me to be wanton."

In hir excus the saide Messalyne  
 Gan alegge hir constellacioun;  
 But prudent clerkis pley[n]li determyne, 392  
 Of the heuenly cours the disposicioun

- In this manner  
Messalina  
pleaded her  
constellation in  
excuse; but  
clerks say that  
no well be-  
haved person  
is constrained  
to do wrong  
by force.  
Nor is there  
any necessity  
for living a  
vicious life.  
There is no  
sin that is not  
voluntary.
- Yet Messalina  
would not  
leave off ex-  
cusing herself.  
"Hercules once  
bore up the  
heavens, yet  
for all his  
chivalry he  
never could  
overcome the  
vice of lechery.
- "And as for  
you, Caligula  
and Tiberius,  
I shall not  
heed what  
either of you  
say. You,  
Gaius Caligula,  
are yourself  
besmirched,  
and should know  
better than  
rebuke others.
- "Your scanda-  
lous behaviour  
is reported  
through all the  
world: you  
seduced your  
three sisters,  
and may well  
blush for  
shame. Don't  
blame me again  
as long as you  
live!
- "It is not  
fitting that a  
thief should sit  
in judgment  
on theft, nor  
should one  
profligate  
chastise others.
- Is obeissaunt & soget to resoun,  
That eueri man which weel gouernid is,  
Is nat constreynd of force to doon amys, — 396
- Nor bynt no man of necessite  
Vicious lustis frowardli to sue.  
A vertuous man stant at liberte  
Fals inclynaciouns be prudence to remewe; 400  
Euery man be grace may eschewe  
All thying to vertu that founde is contrarie:  
For ther is no synne but it be voluntarie.
- Yit for al this, the saide Messalyne 404  
In hire excus[e] wolde nat been in pes:  
"The heuene," quod she, "as poetis determyne,  
Was born up whilom be myhti Hercules,  
Yit coude he neuere of nature ha[ue] reles, 408  
For al his kniethod & his\* cheualrie,  
To ouercome the vice of lecherie.
- But thou Calligula and thou Tiberius, [p. 348]  
What-euer ye seyn I take therof non heede; 412  
For thou Calligula, callid eek Gayus,  
Thi-silff diffouldid with lecherie in deede,  
To rebuke othir thou sholdest stonde in dreede,  
But thi rebukis in parti for to quyte; 416  
Who is diffouldid non othir sholde atwite.
- Bi Fames trumpet thi sclaunder is out blowe,  
Thoruh al the world reportid shamfullie,  
Thi thre sustren fleshli thou dest hem knowe, — 420  
Wex red for shame; and for thi partie,  
For the vice of hatful lecherie  
Duryng thi liff put me no mor in blame,  
Which art thi-silff diffouldid in the same. 424
- It sittith nat in no maner wise  
A theef for theffte to sitte in iugement;  
A lecherous man a lechour to chastise,  
Nor he that hath al his lyff Ispent 428  
In wast & riot, forfeid & myswent,  
To been a iuge othre to redresse,  
Nor leprous lechis to cure men of seeknesse.

409. his] al his B.

411. 1st thou] om. H, R 3.

418. Fames] famous H — out] vp H. 420. dest] didst H.

423. thi] the R. 430. to] for to R.

I wolde ha suffrid and take [in] pacience 432 "If chaste  
 Yiff of Affrik the chast[e] Scipioun Scipio of Africa  
 Hadde me rebukid for\* my gret offence: had rebuked  
 I wolde haue suffrid his yerde of iust resoun. me, or prudent  
 Or yif the famous prudent old Catoun 436 old Cato, I  
 Hadde ageyn me in swich cas maad abraid, should have  
 I wolde haue suffrid what-euere he hadde said. accepted it  
 with submis-  
 sion.

Or yif Lucrese for my correccioun "Or if  
 Hadde seid to me, for vertuouus doctrine, 440 Lucrece had  
 Alle my surfetis myd of Roome toun, held up to  
 I wolde haue bowed [bothe] bak & chyne, me my ex-  
 To have obeied onto hir disciplyne. cesses I should  
 Shame for\* a crepil, to stonde that hath no miht, 444 have bowed  
 To rebuke othir for thei go nat vpriht! down to her  
 discipline.

Ageyn[e]s the also I may replie, "I may also  
 Many another fals conspiracioun say that you  
 Touchyng mateeres of nigromancie, 448 dabbled in  
 And many another contreued fals poisoun necromancy,  
 Founde in too bookis, Bochas makth mencion, and, as Bochas  
 Oon callid Pugio, most superstitious, mentions,  
 And the secounde Inamyd Gladius, 452 concocted  
 poisons with  
 the help of two  
 books, and

Hable al this world tenvenyme & encloie; kept a list of  
 Ageyn thre statis duellyng in Roome toun, the people you  
 Ther namys write of them thou cast destroye, wished to de-  
 Which to remembre is gret abusioun. 456 stroy. After  
 A chest also fulfilled of poisoun, your death  
 Aftir thi deth cast in the se, I reede, your poison  
 Bi which an hundred thousand fisshes wer dede" . . . chest, cast into  
 the sea, killed  
 100,000 fishes.

¶ (On this mateer is tedious for tabide, 460 (This subject is  
 Namli to princis\* born of hih estat; so unpleas-  
 It sittith nat gentil blood to chide, ant, espe-  
 Bi furious rancour to stonde at debat. cially to  
 And for thes mateeres been infortunat, 464 princes, with  
 I wil passe ouer & no mor of hem write, its ill-bred  
 Sauff of ther eende compendiousli tendite.) quarreling,  
 that I will pass  
 over to the  
 last part of it.)

432. in] *om.* R. 434. for] bi B.

444. for] to B, H, R 3, H 5.

446. I may also R.

453. this] be H.

461. princis] princis princessis B, H, R 3, R, J, P, R 2, H 3,  
 H 4, Sl, Add, H 5.

- "I have also something to say to you, Tiberius: the people of Campania scorned you for your unnatural vices,
- "To the Tiberye I haue sumwhat to seyn:  
 Knowe and reportid be many a creature, 468  
 How in Chaumpayne folk hadde of the disdeyn  
 For thi most hatful lecherous ordure,  
 In thilke vice which is ageyn nature,  
 Which tacomplissh, void of al hap & grace, 472  
 Thyn abidyng was in suspescious place.
- and even when you grew old you would not forbear, and used restoratives, so infatuated you were in your debauchery. "What right have you to scold me?
- To swich fals lustis duryng al thi lyff,  
 List nat forber[e]n in thi latter age,  
 Thou vsist many riche restoratif 476  
 In suiche vnthrift tencrece thi corage,  
 Of ribaudi thou fill in such dotage, —  
 How maist thou thanne rebuke me? For shame!  
 Which in such caas art blottid with\* diffame. 480
- "I did wrong when I was young, as Gaius has just said, but you were outrageous all your life; and both of you became froward gluttons to enforce your excesses.
- I dide amys, but it was in my youthe,  
 Horrible thynges, which Gayus heer hath told,  
 But thyn outrage, the\* report is yit kouthe,  
 Thou dist hem vse bothe yong & old. 484  
 And for tafforce your vices manyfold,  
 Thou & Calligula, in al swich ribaudie,  
 Dide grettest surfet in froward glotonie.
- "Moreover, Tibery, when you were emperour, you murdered Asinius, the famous orator,
- Also Tiberye, thou beyng emperour, 488  
 Cruel causeles, & most malicious,  
 Dist moordre in Roome the famous oratour  
 Callid in his tyme prudent Asynus,  
 Which thoruh thempire, Romeyns tolde thus, 492  
 Was liht & lanterne founde at al assaies,  
 Of rethorik[e] callid in his daies.
- and you exiled the king of Parthia out of covetousness, for you wanted his wealth; and he died in distress.
- Thou wer eek cause that worthy\* Nonomus, [p. 349]  
 Kyng of Parthois, thoruh thi cruelte 496  
 Exilid was, thou wer so coueitous  
 To haue possessioun of his tresour, parde, —  
 Deide in myscheff and in pouerte.  
 Be sham[e]fast any wiht taccuse, 500  
 Which in such caas thi-silf canst nat excuse!
- "You let Agrippina starve to death, although she ran to the image of Octavian in the temple for aid.
- ¶ To Agripyne thou dist ful gret outrage,  
 As Romeyn stories weel reherse can,  
 Whan she for socour to the gret image 504  
 Ran to be sauyd of Octouyan,  
 Mid the temple a place callid than,

480. with] for B. 483. outrage the] outrages be B.

495. worthy] werri B, werrey H, werry R, R 3, H 5, H 4, werrei R 2, wery H 3, werreie Add, verry Sl, wourthy H 2.



Which halp hir nat þat she list thidir weende:  
Put out be force; for hunger made an eende. 508

Thyn owyn brothir callid Germanicus,  
Which in his tyme was so good a kniht, —  
¶ Thi brothir also named eek\* Drusus, —  
Bothe wer poisowned & slayn ageyn[es] riht 512  
Bi fals conspiryng of thyn imperial\* myht.  
Texcuse the moordre, thi-siluen at the leste  
Wer clad in blak, at ther funeral feeste.

I haue no kunnyng, speche nor langage 516  
To reherse nor make mencion  
Specialli of the gret outrage  
And sacrilege thou dist in Roome toun,  
Be violence whan thou drouh[e] down 520  
The image of Ianus, & aftir in al hast  
Into Tibre madest hym to be cast.

And thou Calligula, among thi vices all,  
Of surquedie and fals presumpcioun 524  
Woldest that men a god the sholde call,  
Tueen Pollux Castor to haue thi mansioun.  
Fro whiche place\* thou art now throwe down,  
Which heeld thi-silff among the goddis seuene 528  
Egal with Iubiter for to sitte in heuene.

Ansuere to me, heer beyng in presence,  
Which of thes foure, Mars, Ianus, Mynerue,  
Or Mercurie, god of elloquence, 532  
Hath rent the doun, as thou dist disserue,  
Fro Iubiter in myscheef for to sterue?  
That thou heer-aftir, wher-so thou lauh or frowne,  
Shalt haue no fauour mor with hym to rowne. 536

With these defaultis & many another  
Affor[n] rehersid in hyndryng of thi name —  
How thou ordeynest first to slen thi brothir  
With men of armes, which was to the gret shame; 540  
¶ To Tholome thou dist also the same,  
Sone & heir to kyng Iubatoun;  
And many a senatour thou slouh in Roome toun.

511. also named eek] also callid B, eke namyd also H.

513. imperial] owen B. 521. al] al þe H.

526. Castor] & Castor H, P.

527. Fro whiche place] For which B.

- "You shut up the granaries and starved the people of Rome, so that, dreadful to say, they ate their own members.
- Shettist up myd Roome the cite 544  
 Ther gerneris, which neuer afforn was\* seyn;  
 Werbi enfamyned was the comounte, —  
 Pite to heere; this [is] plat & pleyn, —  
 Of necessite constreyned in certeyn 548  
 (Shame to reherse or put [it] in scripture)  
 Eet ther membris, a thyng ageyn nature.
- "I don't suppose that Jupiter or Juno told you to do this; very likely it was Venus, who wanted to flatter you, or Mars. Soon afterwards you yourself were murdered by your own servants.
- Iubiter nor Iuno the goddesse 552  
 Gaff no such counsail, I suppose, onto the;  
 But it was Venus, to flatre thyn hihnesse,  
 And furious Mars, bi froward cruelte  
 To slen senatours grettest of that cite;  
 Thi-sillf soone aftir, wherof the toun was fayn, 556  
 Bi thi *seruauntes* moordrid were & slayn.
- And for tabate thyn outrage & [thi] pride,  
 Which[e] thou hast vsid al thi liff,  
 Lefft up thyn hed, looke on thi lefft[e] side, 560  
 Thou fyndere up of moordre & of striff!  
 ¶ Slouh thou nat Cesonia thi wiff? —  
 Thi douhtir aftir, that callid was Drusill,  
 Of cursid entent thi malis to fulfill? 564
- "I am astonished that neither of you is ashamed to blame me for a small mote like lechery, and cannot see the beam in your own eye.
- I haue *merueile* how any of you tweyne,  
 Thou Calligula or thou Tiberius,  
 Be nat ashamed any thyng to seyne  
 Ageyn[e]s me, with visage despitous 568  
 Me for tatwite that I was lecherous!  
 Of a smal mote ye *can* abraide me,  
 But in *your* eye a beam ye cannot see.
- "Where do your souls dwell? I suppose Charon landed you on the strand of Styx in hell,
- Wher haue *your* soules take *per* herbergage, 572  
 That been *contrarie* *with* me for to stryue?  
 I trowe that Caron hath maad *your* passage  
 Vp at the stronde in helle for taryue,  
 Ther ye abide, thus I [can] descryue, 576  
 Wher dredful Styx, callid be *infernal* flood,  
 Of *custum* renneth with furious wawes wood.

544. Shettist] Settist R, H 5 — myd] amynd H.

545. was] wer B. 547. is] *om.* R, J, P, H 5.549. it] *om.* R, J, R 3.558. thi] *om.* H, R 3, H 5.

560. looke on thi] take on be H.

576. can] *om.* R, J, H, R 3, H 5, P, Sl, H 4, H 3, R 2.

Radamantus, oon of the iuges tweyne, With kyng Mynos hath youe a iugement, Perpetueli ye shal abide in peyne; And Eacus hath ordeyned your torment: In Flegeton,* the flood most violent, Ye shal be drowned & an eende make, Euere for tabide among the stremys blake.	[p. 350] 580     584	where Rhadamantus, Minos, and Æacus have ordained that you shall be forever drowned in Phlegethon.
I may you calle of emperours the refus, Ye sholde be shamfast to shewe out your visages, Verray astoned, dreedful and confus To haue to me so vncurteis langage!" Thus Messalyne daunted ther corage With hir femynyn crabbid elloquence. Thei durste no lenger abide in hir presence.	588     592	"You are the refuse of em- perors, and ought to be ashamed to speak so dis- courteously to me." At this they lost coun- tenance and no longer dared remain in her presence.

[Off the most vicious tiraunt Nero that slouh Petir  
and Paule and atte laste himself.]<sup>1</sup>

<b>T</b> HIS hatful stori <i>witb</i> many a woful lyne Of Calligula and Tiberius, Touching þe strif tueen* hem & Messalyne, Shamful rebukis, froward & odious, Bi them rehersed with cheer most furious, As ye haue herd, heer eendeth ther chidyng; Nero the tirant kometh next onto þe ryng.	596	After this hate- ful quarrel, with its odious and shameful re- bukes, Nero appeared on the ring.
Oon most cursid in <i>comparisoun</i> That euere was, of hih or louh degre, Most disnaturel of condicioun Bi gret outrages of cursid cruelte, That euere regned in Roome the cite. His fadir callid, bookis determyne, Domycius, his moodir Agripyne.	600    604	He was one of the most cursed men who ever lived or reigned in Rome. His father was Domitius and his mother Agrippina.
This Agripyna bi hir subtilite, — And blynde Fortune beyng faourable, That set up tirauntes of froward volunte (Be ther demeritis thouh thei be nat hable)	608	She was sub- tile, and Fur- tune favour- able; but what thing is more dreadful than cruel tyrants!

582. Eacus] Gacus R, J, Cacus P, H 5, Carus H, R 3.

583. Flageton B. 587. visage H. 589. languages R 3.

590. corages R 3.

595. atueen B.

599. onto] on H. 600. Oon] This Nero H.

607. hir] his H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 143 verso.

To estat imperial, famous & notable.  
 What thing mor dredful, who can vnderstonde, 612  
 Than cruel tirauntes with bloodi suerd on honde!

When Nero was twelve years old and had learned his grammar and the seven liberal arts, he was put in the hands of Seneca.

Whan this Nero of age was twelue yeer  
 He was ordeyned in especiall,  
 Afftir he hadde lernid his grameer 616  
 And the seuene artis callid liberall,  
 Vnto a maister in al vertu morall,  
 Callid moral Senec, which did al his peyne  
 From all vices his youthe to restreyne. 620

who kept him from all vices, knowing that his natural inclination was towards evil.

He kepte hym euere, this Senec, as I reede,  
 Maugre his fatal disposicioun,  
 Bi a constreynt & a maner dreede 624  
 From al outrage and dissolucioun.  
 Conseyued weel his inclynacioun  
 To be vicious as of his nature,  
 Which to restreyne he dede his besi cure.

When he was twenty-one years of age he married Octavia, daughter of Claudius and Messalina.

At oon & tuenti wyntir of his age, 628  
 Cronicleers reheresen of hym thus:  
 How he that tyme took in mariage  
 Octovia, douhtir off Claudius, —  
 Al this while beyng vertuuous, 632  
 Whil Senec hadde hym vndir disciplyne, —  
 His moodir-in-lawe callid Messalyne.

All this while Seneca kept him on the path of virtue; and when he was first crowned emperor he won the favour of the Senate.

The saide Senec made hym to desire 636  
 To pursue kunnyng bi dilligent labour;  
 At entryng in first of his empire, —  
 I meene whan he was crownid emperour, —  
 Of alle the Senat hadde gret fauour;  
 And be report, as clerkis of hym write, 640  
 In prose and metre he koude riht weel endite.

He wrote very well in both prose and verse, and made a notable book of poetry called Lusce.

In Iohn Bochas as it is maad[e] mynde,  
 He dide excelle gretli in poetrye,  
 Made in tho daies also, as I fynde, 644  
 A book notable of straunge poisie,  
 Lik as myn auctour of hym doth specefie,  
 The title therof callid[e] Lusce,  
 Ageyn a pretour Clodius Polle. 648

614. twelue] xij B.

618. vertu] werkes H. 629. Cronyclis H, Cronycles R 3.

637. in] om. R. 647. Luscio P. 648. Pollio P.

- Excelled in musik & in armonye,  
 Crownid with laureer for the beste harpou  
 That was that tyme; & he did edefie  
 In Roome a paleis, *witb* many a riche tour, 652  
 Which in beeldyng coste gret tresour,  
 The circuit beyng thre thousand pas;  
 And Transitorie that paleis callid was.
- For this cause, as put is in memorie, 656  
 The said[e] paleis aftirward was brent,  
 Therfor it was callid Transitorie; —  
 But aftir that, Nero in his entent  
 Leet beelde an hous, bi gret auisement, 660  
 To recompence the tothir that was old,  
 And callid it the riche hous of gold.
- In al this world[e] was non to it liche, [p. 351]  
 Wher that euer men did ride or gon, 664  
 Tables of iuor fret with perre riche,  
 Pileres of cristal garnished *witb* many a ston,  
 Saphirs, rubies & topazion, 668  
 Crisolitis & emeraudis greene,  
 With plate of gold tiled that shon ful sheene.
- To bodili lust\* and delectacioun  
 This said[e] Nero set al his desires;  
 Gardyns, conduitis for recreacioun 672  
 He dide ordeyne tendure many yeeris.  
*Witb* nettis of gold fisshed in his ryueeris,  
 His garnementis of golde & Ynde stonis,  
 And neuer he wolde haue hem on but onys. 676
- In his begynnyng, the stori doth deuise,  
 Lord & emperour in Roome the cite,  
 To senatours he gaf ful gret fraunchise,  
 Graunted comouns many gret liberte; 680  
 But in his most imperial dignite,  
 Of froward wil lefft al good policie,  
 And al attonis gaf hym to ribaudie.

He was also an excellent musician and the best harper of his time. He built a palace called Transitory

because it burnt down soon afterwards, and a rich house of gold,

to which none other was comparable, with its ivory tables, crystal pillars ornamented with precious stones, and gold-tiled roof.

All his inclination turned to sensuality. He built gardens and artificial streams in which he fished with golden nets.

His clothes were of gold and jewels, and he would never wear them but once.

670. lust] lustis B.

672. conductes R, J.

674. *is misplaced at end of stanza, but correction indicated R.*

678. in] in the R.

679. To] þe H.

- At first virtuous and liberal, he suddenly turned to ribaldry, left the company of old senators, and harped and sang among vagabonds and openly danced with common women at the brothel.
- In the course of time he fell into gluttony and incontinence, for one vice leads to another; but idleness was the cause of all.
- At Ostia he ordained tents for debauchery, housing cooks and taverners at great expense. Ladies who took part in these revels were not well spoken of afterwards.
- It is also said that this same Nero violated the priestesses of Vesta, who were vowed to chastity.
- One of them, Rubria, he dragged out of the temple and put in a bordel-house in spite of her being a nun.
- Men shall never read any writing of mine about his foul and outrageous deeds with Sporus and Ompharus,
- Of Grece and Egipt with dyuers io[n]glours, 684  
 And among vileyns hymself[e] disporting,\*  
 Leste the presence of olde senatours  
 And among ribaudis he wold harp & synge,  
 Made comedies dishonestli sownyng, 688  
 At the bordel dide hymself auauance  
 With comoun women openli to daunce.  
 Thus be processe, to al vertu contrarie,  
 Be gret excesse he fill in glotonye, 692  
 And aftir that list no lenger tarye, —  
 As euery vice to othir doth applie, —  
 Surfet & riot brouht in lecherie;  
 And ground of al, as cheef[e] porteresse, 696  
 Texile vertu was froward idilnesse.  
 Aboute the cite callid Hostience,  
 Beside Tibre & othir fressh ryuers  
 Dide ordeyne bexcessiff expence 700  
 Tentis for riot, kookis, tauerneeris,  
 And al the niht reuel aboute the feeris.  
 Ladies komen, that wer afforn weel namyd,  
 Bi suich fals riot wer aftirward diffamed. 704  
 The same Nero be fals abusioun,  
 It is reportid, his\* stori who list see,  
 Bi violence from ther religioun,  
 Suich as hadde auowed chastite 708  
 And wer professid to virgynyte  
 In the temple of Vesta the goddessse, —  
 Of froward lust he dide hem oppresse.  
 Amongis which Rubria was oon: 712  
 Maugre hir wil, she durste [it] nat denye,  
 From the temple bilt of lym & ston  
 Sacrid to Vesta, myn auctour list nat lie,  
 He rente hir out to vse his lecherie; 716  
 Natwithstandyng she was religious,  
 Made hir tabide at the bordel-hous.  
 Be my writyng men shal neuer reede,  
 The mateer is so foul & outragous 720  
 To be rehersed, & the horrible deede  
 Which Nero vsid whilom on Sporus  
 And on another callid Ompharus:

684. Ioglers P. 685. disparting B, dispartynge R.  
 698. Aboute] Aboue R. 706. his] the B. 707. ther] the R.  
 723. Ompharus] Doriphorus P.

- Bothe male childre, as bookis telle can, 724  
Them to transffoorme to liknesse of [wo]man.
- Somme bookis of hym determyne, and some  
Lik a ribaude horrible & detestable, books say of  
He mysusid his moodir Agripyne, 728 him, that like  
And lik a tiraunt cruel & vengable, — a detestable  
Which to remembre it is abhominable, — ribald, he had  
He made hir wombe be korue upon a day his mother's  
To seen the place nyne monethes wher he lay. 732 womb carved  
open to see  
where he had  
lain for nine  
months.
- Of disnaturel hatful cruelte,  
To God nor vertu hauyng no reward,  
And of the vice of prodigalite  
He was accusid, in kniethod a coward, 736  
And to al vertu contrarie & froward, —  
Of whos woodnesse good heed whan I took,  
I was ashamed to sette hym in this book.
- He hated alle that wer vertuous 740  
And to hem hadde specialli envie;  
His brethre, his wiff, this tiraunt despitous,  
He falsli slouh in his malencolie;  
His maister Senec, auctours specefie, 744  
Ay whan he sauh hym, hauyng a maner dreede,  
In an hot bath to deth he made hym bleede.
- Cristis feith[e] first he gan werreye, [p. 352]  
Of emperours, in his froward entent; 748  
Petir & Poule in Roome he made deie  
Vpon a day; ther legende doth assente.  
Half the cite of Roome, I fynde, he brente;  
And senatour[es] wol nih euerichon 752  
This Nero slouh; spared almost neueroon.
- To Pollifagus, a wood man most sauage,\*  
Which that fedde hym most *with* flessch of man,  
Nero took men, olde & yong of age, 756  
To fynde hym vitaille in streetis wher he cam.  
Cursid at his eende, cursid whan he gan,  
Whan he did offre innocentes blood  
To be deuoured of hym that ran so wood. 760
- He was ac-  
cused of un-  
natural, hate-  
ful cruelty, a  
prodigal and  
a coward; and  
when I took  
heed of his  
madness I felt  
ashamed to  
put him in  
this book.
- He hated all  
virtuous  
people,  
and slew his  
brother and  
his wife and  
Seneca, his  
master.
- The first em-  
peror to perse-  
cute the  
Christians, he  
martyred  
Peter and  
Paul, killed  
almost all the  
senators, and  
burnt up the  
half of Rome.
- He fed  
Polyphagus,  
a savage  
madman,  
with human  
flesh.

725. woman] man H, R, R 3, H 5, a man J, woman P.

749. in] &amp; H.

752. wol nih] volneth R.

753. neueroon] noon H, R 3, none P.

754. *This stanza is transposed with the next in P and MSS. except H.*

760. ran] was H.

His mules were shod with silver for pride; and after he burnt Rome the people chased him from his suburban palace

Made his mules be shod with siluer shoone  
Of surquedie, whan he shold[e] ride;  
The cite brent. Romeyns aftir soone  
Pursued hym upon eueri side; 764  
And from a subarbe wher he dide abide,  
Tween Salaria & Numentana riht,  
Ther stant a path whidir he took his fliht.

to a deep marsh, and there, seeing himself trapped, he pierced his heart with a dagger. A cursed end!

Bi a deep maris as\* Nero took his fliht, 768  
Whan he sauh he myht[e] nat asterte, —  
He was [so] pursued bi a Romeyn kniht  
To fynde socour he myht[e] nat dyuerte, —  
Rooff hymselff anon [un]to the herte 772  
With a sharp dagger, a cursid eende, loo!  
Of the fals tiraunt that callid was Nero.

### Lenvoye.<sup>1</sup>

No prince, should take pleasure in reading the story of Nero; it has to do only with murder, treason, adultery, excess, poison, riot, gluttony, lechery, vengeance, and suicide.

OFF this Nero to write[n] a Lenvoye,  
Nor of his deedis to make mencion, 776  
To reede þe processe no prince shold haue ioye,  
For al concludeth on moordre and on tresoun,  
On auoutrye, excesse & poison,  
Riot, glotonye, lecherie, vengauce, 780  
Slauhtre of hymselff[e]; eendid with myschaunce.

If I could, I would scratch his name out of my book. Let no one remember anything more about him than this: that every tyrant ends in misfortune.

Yif that I myhte, I wolde race\* his name  
Out of this book, that no man sholde reede  
His vicious lyf, cheef merour of diffame. 784  
Set hym aside; let no wiht take[n] heede  
For to remembre so many a cruel deede,  
Sauf onli this, to thynken\* in substaunce,  
How eueri tiraunt eendith with mischaunce. 788

What I say of him is said only in reproof.

Of hym I caste to write now\* no more,  
And what I seie is\* seid but in repreff  
Of the vices that he wrouht of yore  
Duryng his empire, concludyng for a theeff. 792  
Al tirannye shal eende with myscheeff,  
Record on Nero, which for mysgouernaunce,  
As ye haue herd[e], eendid with myschaunce.

768. as] whan B. 772. unto] even to H.

782. racen B, R, J.

783. reede] it reede R, J, P. 787. thynken] maken B.

789. to write now] now to write B. 790. is] I B.

794. on] of R.

<sup>1</sup> "In stede off a Lenuoie," R.



[How Eleazerus a Iewe born / for extorcioun and robbery / was brouht in prisoun and there ended.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR Nero cam Eleazarus,  
A Iew of berthe, a prince of robberie,  
An extursioneer cruel & despitous;  
For his outrages doon in that partie,  
To redresse his hatful tyrannye,  
A myhti pretour sent fro Roome doun,  
Callid Phelix, into that regeoun.

796 Eleazar, a Jew, came after Nero. He was a prince of robbery and a cruel extortioner, but Felix came down from Rome

Be force of Phelix take he was & bounde,  
Maugre his myht[e], onto Roome sent,  
Strongli fetrid with massif cheynis rounde,  
Suffred in prisoun many gret torment.  
At the laste, this was his iugement,  
Ther tabide because he was a theeff;  
For euermore eendid in myscheeff.

804 and captured him and sent him to prison for life.

808

[How the hede of Galba was smyten of filled full of gold / and offred atte the Sepulcre of Nero.]<sup>2</sup>

¶ Tofor Bochas next cam Galba doun,  
Which in Spayne did many knihtli deede.  
Afftir the deth rehersed of Neroun  
He stode in hope, this Galba, as I reede,  
In thempire iustli to succeede,  
Parcel for kniethod, he hath hym so weel born,  
And\* for gret mariage which he had had befor.

812 Galba, who had done many a knightly deed in Spain, usurped the throne after Nero.

816

I fynde in Bochas rehersed in sentence,  
He was disclaundrid of hatful vices thre;  
He was cruel, contrarye to clemence,  
Streiht in keepyng, geyn liberalite,  
Vengable of herte, geyn mercy & pite, —  
A thyng nat sitting onto cheualrie, —  
Of custom youe to slouthe & slogardie.

820 He was a cruel, avaricious, revengeful and lazy man.

798. extorsioner R, R 3, extorcioner H, H 5, P.  
802, 3. Felix R, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.  
809. For euermore] For euer for euer more R.  
816. And] As B, H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

He claimed title to the empire by his adopted son, but not long afterwards his head was smitten off by Otho

To occupie thempire he began, 824  
 Among[es] Romeyns took pcessioun,  
 Cleymyng a title bi oon Licynyan  
 That was his sone bi adopcioun.  
 But [anone] aftir for his presumpcioun, 828  
 Oon callid Oththo, a ful manli kniht,  
 Smet of his hed, wher it wer wrong or riht.

and filled with gold by Patro- bolus and offered up to the gods of the lower regions at the sepulchre of Nero.

This said[e] Galba, myn auctour writeth thus, [p. 353]  
 From his empire vnwarli pullid down, 832  
 Hadde an emny callid Patrobolus,  
 The hed of Galba took in pcessioun,  
 Filde it with golde, made an oblacioun  
 At the sepulchre of Nero therwithal 836  
 To alle the goddis & goddessis infernal.

[How Ottho and Vitellius / for glotony lechery  
 ribaudrie and cruelte / ended in mischeef.]<sup>1</sup>

After this sacrifice, Piso came to make his complaint to Bochas. Surnamed Licinian and adopted son of Galba, he was slain by Otho.

¶ And after that this offryng was ful do,  
 As ye haue herd[e], to Iohn Bochas than  
 To make his compleynt in ordre cam Piso, 840  
 Affor surnamyd iustli Licynyan,  
 Sone adoptiff, to telle as I began,  
 Of saide Galba, cleymyng to succede,  
 Slayn anon aftir bi Ottho, as I reede. 844

The empire was then di- vided into three and gov- erned by Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian.

Than was themp[i]re partid into thre:  
 Ottho took Roome vnto his partye;  
 And Vitellius to regne in the contre,  
 Ouer the boundis of al Germanye; 848  
 And Vespasian regned in Surrye.  
 But first this Ottho, surnamyd Siluyus,  
 Cam to compleyne, cruel and despitous.

Otho, whose family name was Silvius, usurped the empire by murder and outrage, and began a war against Vitel- lius.

Of al thempire this same\* Siluyus 852  
 Be slauhtre, rauyne & extorsioun,  
 Bi moordre, deth & deedis outraious  
 With myhti hond took ther pcessioun.  
 And ther began a gret deuysioun, 856

829. *The name Otho is spelled variously with c's and t's in the MSS.; it is probable however that the c's are usually meant for t's* (Oecho R, R 3, Oecho J, Oecho B, H, Otho P).

833. Hadde] And R — Patrobolus R, H, J, R 3, H 5, Patro- bius P.

836. sepulture H. 841. lycyvia H. 845. into] in R.  
 852. this same] surnamyd B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

Which was occasioun of gret sorwe & wo,  
Atween Vitellius and this seid Ottho.

It is rehersed, that in Germanye  
In sondri placis thei hadde batailes thre,  
In the which Ottho *with* his partie  
Venquished the feeld & maad his foon to flee.  
But thoruh Fortunys mutabilite,  
The fourte tyme, pley<sup>n</sup>li this the caas,  
Maugre his myht discourfited *per* he was.

860 He won three battles in Germany, but was defeated in a fourth battle,

Tofor Bedrye, a myhti strong cite  
Of Germanye was this disconfiture.

and, overcome with despair, killed himself.

Aftir which of froward cruelte  
The said[e] Ottho, seeyng his auenture,  
With wo supprised miht[e] nat endure  
Of his *constreynt* thymportable peyne;  
Took a sharp suerd & roof his herte *on* tweyne.

868

872

Vitellius hauyng the victorye,  
With his poweer, as maad is mencion,  
Of surquedie & fals[e] veynglorie,  
*Cam* with his host[e] into Roome toun.  
But Bochas heer maketh a descripcioun,  
Rehersyng shortli his berthe & eek his lyne,  
And how that he of blood was Saturnyne.

Vitellius came vaingloriously into Rome with his army;

876

This to seyne, Saturnyus, kyng of Crete,  
Chacid bi Iubiter out of his regioun, —  
And Ianus hadde in Itaille take his seete  
Vpon a mount callid Ianiculun,  
Wher now of Roome is bilt the large toun, —  
Ianus resceyuyng of liberalite  
Whan Saturn fledde, into his cite.

880

884

and Bochas says that he was descended from Saturn, whom Jupiter expelled from his kingdom. Saturn was received in Rome by Janus,

Tofor<sup>n</sup> the komyng of Satvrn, this no faille,  
Rud & boistous, & bestial of resoun  
Was al the people abidyng in Itaille;  
Lond was non sowe nor turnid up-so-down,  
Nor marchaundise vsid in no toun  
Til Saturn tauhte the maner of luyyng,  
Of tilthe & labour to Ianus that was kyng.

888

892

and before his coming the people were rude and unlettered and did not even know how to till the soil or chaffer in merchandise,

869. The] This R.

880. Saturnus P.

893. & labour] of londe H — to Ianus] om. R.

- and were like  
beasts until  
Saturn taught  
Janus the art  
of living.
- Afforn whos comyng, tofor as I you told,  
Craft was non vsid be no creature,  
Nor no beeldyng of housis newe [n]or old, 896  
But lyued as beestis the[r] lyfode to recure,  
Lik as thei wern Ilernid of Nature.  
Thei koude tho daies make no cloth nor shape,  
Off\* frosti wedris the greuous cold tescape. 900
- They could  
not make  
cloth, and were  
very poor  
cooks, and had  
no markets in  
their towns.
- Thei wer nat besi be costful apparaille  
Of sondry metis and confeccions,  
Off dyuers drynkes & manyfold vitaille  
To be corious to ther refeccions. 904  
Marketis wer none in cites nor in touns;  
No man with othir bouhte nouthor solde  
Til Saturn cam & them the maner tolde.
- But after  
Saturn had  
taught them  
how to be  
civilized, these  
simple folk  
worshipped  
him as the  
mightiest of  
their gods.
- And whan he hadde tauhte them þe maneere 908  
And set an ordre of ther gouernaunce,  
The symple peple, as bookis doth vs lere,  
Lich as to God dide ther attendaunce,  
With certeyn rihtes to doon þer obseruaunce, 912  
Worsheped hym, & aftir dide hym calle  
Saturn, most myhti of ther goddis all.
- Latinus was a  
descendant of  
Saturn and so  
was Lavinia,  
his daughter,  
ancestress  
of Vitellius.
- [Aftyr this Saturne was made a pe-degre,  
To sett an ordre conveied from his lynes 916  
Descendyng down, the maneer who list see,  
To oon Latynus and so foorth to Lavyne,  
Which was his douhtir, as poetis determyne.  
Thus bi discent from\* Saturne and Funus, 920  
Born off ther bloode cam Vitellius,]
- The first  
knight of the  
lineage was  
Vitellius Pub-  
lius; and his  
descendant,  
Vitellius Lucius,  
was father of  
the emperor.
- The firste kniht bor[e]n of that lynage. [p. 354]  
Because he was manli & riht famous,  
Hadde in armys prowesse & gret corage, 924  
He callid was Vitill[i]us Publius;  
And of hym cam Vitell[i]us Lucius,  
Fadir to hym, myn auctour doth expresse,  
Of whom that I haue gunne this processe. 928

900. Off] The B.

903. Off] to H.

910. The] Thei R, Ther J — doth] don R, J.

914. of] to H.

915. This stanza is supplied from R.

920. from] to R.

- D**YUERS stories remembre & pleynli tell,  
 Dvryng his youthe & stood at liberte,  
 How þis forseid, that callid was Vitell,  
 Was the most vicious that owher myhte be,  
 Youe to ribaudie & al dishoneste,  
 Because of which chaungid was his name,  
 Callid Spyntoire, a name of gret diffame.
- I fynde that he was an hazardour,  
 In al his werkis passyng riotous,  
 For his surfetis gret *with* the emperour  
 That whilom was callid Claudius.  
 And for his deedis & maneeres outraious,  
 For his gret wast and prodigalite  
 Of gret dispence he fill in pouerte.
- Among his riotis [&] surfetis mo than oon  
 Which he dide in contres heer & ther,  
 I fynde that he for neede solde a ston  
 Which his mooder bar whilom\* at hir ere.  
 For be old tyme was vsid, who list lere,  
 Women that wern that tyme of hih degre  
 Bar at ther eris stonis & perre.
- And bi the sellyng of that riche ston,  
 For which that he reseuyed gret tresour,  
 Be sotil werkyng & slehtis mo than oon  
 He gat hym freendis & was maad emperour.  
 And therwithal he dide eek his labour  
 To reseuyue another dignite,  
 To be cheef bisshop in\* Roome the cite.
- And in short tyme this Vitellius  
 Of thempire took on hym al thestat,  
 The suerd resseyued of Cesar Iulius,  
 Vsed a garnement that was purpurat,  
 Dempte of hymself he was most fortunat,  
 Natwithstanding mor boldli þat tyme atte leste\*  
 Of Aliensois holden was the feeste.

932 It is said that this Vitell was one of the most vicious youths that ever lived, given to all dishonesty and called Spintor, an infamous name.

936 He was a gambler and a prodigal, and fell into poverty because of his excesses.

940

944 Finally he sold a stone his mother had worn at her ear (for in olden times women of high station wore jewelry in their ears),

948

952 and through the proceeds and his cunning he got himself friends and was made emperor. He also wanted to be chief bishop.

956

960 He received the sword of Julius Cæsar, wore purple, and considered himself most fortunate.

941. and] of H.

946. his] is R — whilom bar B, bare sometyme H, bar some tym R 3.

956. in] of B.

958. al] om. R.

962. mor boldli þat tyme atte leste] þat tyme mor boldli at the leste B — þat tyme] om. H.

The feast of  
Aliensois was  
then being held,  
during which  
no one was  
required to do  
any virtuous  
labour;

Aliensois was a solempnite 964  
Among[es] Romeyns kept be daies olde,  
In Frenssh myn auctour recordeth thus, parde,—  
And in that tyme of custum no man sholde,  
Nor be statut bounde was nor holde 968  
To do no maner occupacioun  
That touched vertu or religioun.

and bound up  
with it was a  
custom of  
granting the  
requests of all  
people. So  
Vitellius asked  
to be bishop,  
and no one  
dared say no.

Duryng this feeste he sholde haue his axyng,  
Bi a custum vsid in that cite. 972  
And Vitellius, as emperour & kyng,  
Axed that tyme another dignite,  
To be cheef bisshop & haue auctorite  
Of that estat, with poweer hool & pley[n]; 976  
No man so hardi to replie ther ageyn.

He set all  
wisdom and  
knowledge at  
nought and left  
knighthood  
and providence,  
and gave him-  
self up wholly  
to idleness and  
gluttony.

From al vertu Vitelli dide varye,  
Set at nouht al wisdam & science, 980  
Thouhte onto hym was nat necessarye  
Kunnyng, kniithod, manhod nor prouidence;  
Gaf hym onli to slouhthe & necligence,  
To glotonye, folwyng his desir[e]s,  
Wach al niht with drynk & resoper[e]s. 984

As he was a  
bishop he offi-  
ciated in the  
temple, and  
often he would  
cast aside the  
censer and call  
a kitchen boy  
to the altar  
and command  
him to bring  
him his dinner.

Beyng a bisshop of ther paynym lawe,  
Lik Romeyn rihtis doyng per seruise  
Tofor the goddes; he wolde hymself withdrawe  
And cast aside censer and sacrefise 988  
And calle a boy in ful vngoodli wise,  
A kichen boy, tofor the hih aulteer,  
And hym comaundid to brynge hym his dyneer!

Always  
gluttonous and  
drunk,

Beyng arrayed in his pontificall, 992  
For the maner void of deuocioun,  
Lik a ribaude, or lik a wood menstrall  
Euer dronclew, & out of al sesoun,  
Gorge upon gorge, this excessif glotoun, 996  
Moste idropik, drank ofte ageyn[es] lust:  
The mor he drank the mor he was a-thrust.

970. vertu or] vnto R, onto J.

978. Vitell J, P.

979. at nouht] anouht R.

994. mynstrall H, R.

996. upon] vp R.

- This was a bisshop sacrid for\* Sathan,  
 And an emperour crownid with myschaunce: 1000  
 Mor lik in poorte a beeste than a man.  
 Vsed al his poweer in slauhtre & in vengauunce;  
 To sheede blood was set al his plesaunce,  
 Takyng non heed nouthur of wrong nor riht; 1004  
 And thus he wex hatful to eueri wiht.
- His soudiours forsook hym nih echon, [p. 355]  
 In al parties bi hym wher thei wer sent; .  
 Thoruh al the contres of Septemprion 1008  
 And in al Surrye toward thorient,  
 Of oon accord & alle of oon assent  
 Echon forsook hym; with hym bood\* nat a man,  
 And becam seruauentes to Vespasian. 1012
- Vitellius sauh it wolde be non othir,  
 And he for-feeble [of] dronknesse & outrage, —  
 And sauh the poweer gan failen of his brothir,  
 Whan he had sett\* and signed the viage 1016  
 Ageyn Vespasian to holden his passage:  
 But al for nouht, bakward wente his partie,  
 Stood dispeired of eueri remedie.
- Thus Vitellius vnhappi to the werris, 1020  
 Lik a fordronke vnhappi gret glotoun,\*  
 Whos booste afforn[e] rauht up to the sterris,  
 Now al his pride in myscheef is come down,  
 Fayn for taccorde to this conuencioun: 1024  
 For litil tresour, which men sholde hym assigne,  
 To Vespasian thempire to resigne.
- This was his promys, but he heeld it nouht:  
 What he saide, his woord was neuer stable; 1028  
 Certeyn flatereres chaungid hadde his thouht,  
 And certeyn comouns, that euer be chaungable,  
 Gaff hym counsail, saide hymself was hable  
 To gouerne thestat imperial, 1032  
 And non so hable for to reknen al.

he was a bishop  
 sacred to  
 Satan, more  
 like a beast  
 than a man.  
 As his pleasure  
 lay most in  
 shedding blood  
 without heed  
 to right and  
 wrong, he was  
 hated by all  
 men.

His soldiers  
 deserted him  
 and entered  
 the service of  
 Vespasian.

Made weak by  
 drink and ex-  
 cess, and seeing  
 that the ex-  
 pedition he had  
 sent against  
 Vespasian had  
 failed, he de-  
 spaired,—

a great un-  
 happy  
 drunken  
 glutton, and  
 was glad to  
 resign his im-  
 perial dignity  
 for a small  
 compensation.

But when flat-  
 terers told him  
 that he  
 was best able  
 to govern  
 Rome, he  
 broke his  
 promise

999. for] of B.

1011. boode nat *with* hym H — abood B.

1016. sett] sent B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 1019. dispeired R.

1021.] Lik afforn dronke vnhappi stronge glotoun B.

1024. this] his R.

1027. his] my H.

1030. that] be H.

- and began a new war out of presumption, and sent the head of Fabius, Vespasian's brother, who had been killed,
- First of Almayne he sent out soudiours,  
And of presumpcioun a newe werre he gan.  
Thouhte that he was among othir werreyours 1036  
Hable to\* fihte ageyn Vaspasian.  
And of auenture it befill so than,  
In thes werris Vespasyanis brothir\*  
I-slay[e]n was; it wolde be non othir. 1040
- to Rome. After that he burnt down the Capitol and soon lost the favour of the Romans.
- This froward man callid Vitellius,  
Vngracious euere founde in his entente,  
Smet of the hed of seide Fabius,  
Brothir of Vespasian, & it to Roome sente, 1044  
And aftir that the Capitoile [he] brente.  
But suyng on, *witbynne* a litil space  
Among Romeyns he loste bothe hap & grace.
- Why should I write more of his debauchery?  
His cook and pastryman did not forsake him; they followed him to the Campania.
- Of his riot what sholde I mor entrete? — 1048  
For except riot of *hym* nothyng I reede.  
His cook, his pastleer, folk that wer most meete  
To serue his lust & appetites to feede,  
Forsook *hym* nat, but went *with hym* in deede 1052  
Toward Champayne riht as any lyne  
Vp to an hill[e] callid Auentyne.
- Later on he returned to Rome, hoping to ingratiate himself with Vespasian. Seized at last in his palace, he denied his own name,
- Stondyng in hope, but that was but *in veyn*,  
Of Vespasian the fauour to recure, 1056  
Euene to Roome retournid is ageyn,  
The paleis entrid; & ther *hym*silff tassure,  
Hauyng *with hym* non othir creature,  
The gatis shet, which was to *hym* gret shame; 1060  
Take at the laste, forsook his owne name.
- and was led half naked before the populace, his hands bound behind his back, looking like a madman.
- Halff naked he was & haluendel Iclad,  
Al allone lik as he was founde.  
So in the cite affor the peepel lad; 1064  
Bothe his hondis behynde his bak wer bounde  
*With myhti cheynys* & *with ropis rounde*.  
Lik a wood man of look & of visage,  
The peepel to *hym* hauyng this langage: 1068

1035. he] *om.* H.

1036. werreyours] Soudiours H.

1037. to] for to B, R, P, H 5, R 3, H.

1039, 40. *The second halves of these lines are transposed B.*

1043. the said R.

1044. of] *ynto* R.

1051. lustis H.



- "O thou olde lecherous foul gloutoun,  
 A verray coward, to al vertu contrarie,  
 Cruel, vengable of thi condicioun,  
 To euery goodman cruel aduersarye, 1072  
 To all cursid benigne & debonaire,  
 Roote of al surfetis, hauyng ay delit  
 To sewe & folwe thi lecherous appetit!"
- With such rebukis & castyng of ordure, 1076  
 With donge & clay was blottid his visage.  
 In the presence of many a creature,  
 With cordes drawen he was be gret outrage  
 Vnto a place callid in ther langage, 1080  
 Ther most cheeff rakkes or galwes of þe toun,  
 Wher is of custum doon execucioun.
- Summe remembre he slay[e]n was in haste,  
 With sharp[e] suerdis dismembred on þe ground, 1084  
 His careyn aftir into Tibre cast  
 With a large hook of iren, sharp & round,—  
 No mor reuerencid than was a stynkyng hound.  
 Remembryng heer myn auctour seith also 1088  
 Of this Vitellius, Galba & Ottho,
- Affermyng thus, as for ther partie, [p. 356]  
 Thei be namyd among the emperours, 1092  
 For a tyme thestat did occupie;  
 And first this Galba, be record of auctours,  
 Deide at myscheeff, void of al socours,  
 Eihte monethes regned as lord & sire,  
 And aftir that cast out of his empire. 1096
- The thridde moneth, as maad is menciou[n],  
 Ottho deide, proude & ambicious.  
 And, as I fynde, the domynacioun 1100  
 Laste eihte monethes of Vitellius.  
 And for thei wern proud ribaudes\* lecherous,  
 Cruel, vengable, born of cursid lyne,  
 In wrechchidnesse echon thei dide fyne.

The people called him a coward, an enemy of every good man, a lecherous foul old glutton,

and threw dung in his face. He was then drawn with cords to the gallows,

and despatched with swords. They fastened his carrion to an iron hook and threw it into the Tiber; and no more respect was paid to him than to a stinking hound.

Thus, to recapitulate: Galba died in misfortune, cast out of his empire after a reign of eight months;

Otho died in the third month of his reign; and Vitellius reigned eight months. As they were all proud dissolute ribalds, they ended in misery.

1074. ay] evir H.

1078. a] om. R, H.

1087. a] om. H.

1089. Galba] of Galba R.

1101. ribaudes] ribaudi B, P, R, ribaudie J — & lecherous H.

Bochas dampnyth þe Vice of Glotonye.<sup>1</sup>

Bochas, seeing  
the great  
iniquity of this  
froward com-  
pany, took up  
his pen to  
condemn the  
vice of  
gluttony.

**H**EEER Iohn Bochas seyng the gret offense 1104  
Of this forseid froward companye,  
Took his penne of enteer dilligence,  
And in his studie gan hymselff applie  
To dampne the vice of hatful glotonye, 1108  
Fro which[e] synne, record[e] of Adam,  
Al our myscheeuys & sorowis cam.

All our sorrows  
arose from it,  
as witness  
Adam, who in  
his folly and  
conceit allowed  
himself to be  
governed by a  
serpent.

Be the outrage of disobeissaunce,  
Our said[e] fadir beyng in paradys, 1112  
Tween hym and vertu ther roos a gret distaunce,  
Cleerli conceyued, he that was so wis,  
About creatures be resoun bar the pris,  
Til [he] of foli wrongli gaff assent 1116  
To be gouernid bi a fals serpent.

His innate  
virtues forsook  
him and re-  
turned to  
heaven, and  
for this we  
have great  
reason to  
mourn.

His innat vertues did hym anon forsake  
For his assentyng, & did in hast retourne  
Ageyn to heuene, whan the infernal snake 1120  
In stede of vertu did with man soiourne.  
For which we han gret mateer for to mourne,  
Sith that we been diffourmyd in certeyn,  
Be vicious lyuyng of vertu maad bareyn. 1124

Our vices  
became domi-  
nant, assailing  
us woeful  
wretches, when  
we abandoned  
the four vir-  
tues,

And thus cam in the domynacioun  
Of vices alle, & heeld a gret bataille,  
The retenv sent from thynfernal dongoun,  
Vs woful wrechchis in erthe for tassaille, 1128  
Strechchyng ther poweer, & proudli gan preuaille  
Thoruh al the world[e] & pecessioun took,  
For our demerites whan vertues vs forsook.

Prudence,  
Temperance,  
Righteousness,  
and Fortitude.

Thes said[e] vertues comprised in the noumbre 1132  
Of foure reknid: Prudence, Attemperaunce,  
Of\* vicious lyff tadawed vs fro the slombre,  
Rihtwisnesse taue holde the ballaunce,  
And Fortitudo of ther alliaunce; 1136  
Whan thei forsake mankynde to gouerne,  
Than of al vertu was clipped the lanterne.

1114. he that] þat he H. 1115. be resoun] om. R.

1125. thus] om. H.

1134. Of] Fro B, J, H 5, R 3, From R, P.

<sup>1</sup> The heading is as follows in MS. J. leaf 146 recto: "Here Bochas ageyne Glotonye compleyneth seieng as it folowith."

- Thus thoruh dirknesse vices wer made bold,  
The multitude almost innumerable. 1140  
Amonges all reknid of newe or old,  
Ther be foure pereilous & reprouvable:  
Slouthe, Lecherye, & most abhominable,  
Fals Auarice bi a gredi desir, 1144  
*With* Glotonye, cheef kyndeler of ther fyr.
- Nature in soth with litil is content;  
And as myn auctour abidith heer a while,  
And to remembre was sumwhat dilligent 1148  
To write, whan Saturn regned in þe ile  
Callid Crete, the prophetesse Cibile,  
In hir tyme, bi gret auctorite,  
The world deuyded prudentli in thre. 1152

[A Chapitle descryuynge the golden worlde, that is  
to say whan attemperaunce had hooly the  
gouernaunce.]<sup>1</sup>

- T**HE olde world, whan Saturn was first kyng,  
Regnyng in Crete in his roial estat,  
Noe, Abraham be vertuous luyng  
Caused erthli folk to be most fortunat, 1156  
The world tho daies callid Aureat;  
For sobirnesse and attemperaunce  
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Ther was that tyme no wrong nor violence, 1160  
Envie exiled from eueri creature,  
Dissolucioun & dronken insolence,  
Ribaudie & al swich foul\* ordure,  
Froward surfetis, contrarye to nature, 1164  
Ibanshed wern, because attemperaunce  
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Youthe was bridled vnder disciplyne, [p. 357]  
Vertuous studie floured in myddil age, 1168  
Dreed heeld the yerde of norture\* & doctrine,  
Riot restreynd from surquedous outrage,  
Hatful detraccioun repressid his langage,

The four perilous vices are Sloth, Lechery, Avarice, and Gluttony, chief kindler of their fire.

Nature is content with little; and my author stops here to write about the Golden World, when Saturn reigned in Crete.

Noah and Abraham also lived at that time, and soberness and temperance ruled the world.

There was no wrong nor violence, drunken insolence, and froward excesses.

Youth was bridled under discipline, and virtuous study flowered until middle age; riot was restrained; there was no hateful detraction.

1145. ther] þe H. 1149. ysle R, Isle H.

1163. foul] fals B, H.

1165. wern] was R — Ibanysshid H.

1169. norture] nature B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 146 verso. *There is no initial in B.*

- Kouth was charite, because attemperance 1172  
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Chastity was chastised by  
 knightlood, heretikes were  
 punished, and the church held  
 up in spiritual dignite.  
 Fortitudo stood tho in his myht,  
 Diffendid widwes & cherished chastite,  
 [Knythod in prowesse gaff out so cleer a liht,] 1176  
 Girt with his suerd of trouthe & equyte,  
 Heeld up the cherch in spiritual dignite,  
 Punshed heretikes, because attemperance  
 Had in that world hooli the gouernaunce. 1180
- Jurons were honest,  
 promyses were kept, for-  
 swearing and lying dared  
 enter no town.  
 Rihtwisnesse chastised al robbours  
 Be egal ballaunce of excusioun,  
 Fraude, fals meede put bakward fro iorours,  
 Trewe promys holde made no dilacioun, 1184  
 Forsueryng shamyd, durste entre in no toun,  
 Nor lesyngmongers, because attemperance  
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- The seven deeds of mercy  
 were constantly per-  
 formed; the rich ready to  
 give alms, and no one was  
 refused a lodg-  
 ing for the  
 night.  
 That golden world coude loue God & dreede, 1188  
 Alle the seuene deedis of mercy for to vse;  
 The riche was redi to do almessedeede:  
 Who asked herborwe, men dide hym nat refuse.  
 No man of malis wolde othir tho accuse, 1192  
 Diffame his neiighbour, because attemperance  
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Merchants and  
 artisans were  
 upright, the  
 plow was held  
 firmly to the  
 furrow, the  
 labourer was  
 never idle.  
 The trewe marchaunt be mesour bouhte & solde,  
 Deceit was non in the artificeer, 1196  
 Makyng no balkis, the plow was treuli holde,  
 Abak stood idilnesse ferr from\* laboreer,  
 Discrecioun marchall at dyneer &\* sopeer,  
 Content with mesour, because attemperance 1200  
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- There was no  
 luxurious ex-  
 cess in cloth-  
 ing (although  
 one could  
 know the lord  
 from his sub-  
 ject); no one  
 boasted or  
 feigned.  
 Of wast in cloth yng was that tyme non excesse,  
 Men myhte the lord from his soget knowe,  
 A difference maad tween pouert & richesse, 1204  
 Tween a princesse & othir statis lowe,  
 Of hornyd beestis no boost was than Iblowe,  
 Nor countirfet feyning, because attemperance  
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce. 1208

1176. B has in place of this line the third of the preceding stanza. — a] om. R.

1179. Punysshed R, H. 1183. bakward] bak H.

1188. That] The H.

1198. from] from the B, H. 1199. &] & at B.

1201.] Was set asyde and lost hir gouernaunce R.

1206. was then no boste R.

- This goldene world long while did endure,  
Was non allay in that metal scene,  
Til Saturn cesid, be record of scripture;  
Iubiter regned, put out his fadir cleene,  
1212 *Changed Obrisson into siluer sheene,*  
*Al up-so-down, because attemperau[n]ce*  
*Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.*
- Of Martis myneral the metal is so strong,  
1216 *Inflexible and nat malliable,*  
*Be sturdynesse to do the peple wrong*  
*With rigerous suerd, fureous & vengable,*  
1220 *The merciful gold [of] Phebus nat plicable*  
*To haue compassioun, because attemp[e]raunce*  
*Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.*
- Leed, of philisophres, is callid gold leprous,  
1224 *Tyn of Iubiter, crasshyng & dul of soun,*  
*Fals and fugitiff is mercurivs, —*  
*The moone is mutable of hir condicioun.*  
1228 *The goldene world is turnid up-so-down*  
*In ech estat, sith[en] attemperau[n]ce*  
*Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.*
- Be Cibilis exposicioun,  
Tak of this metal the moralite:  
1232 *The goldene world was gouerned be resoun,*  
*The world of iren was furious cruelte;*  
*The moone is mutable, ful of duplicite,*  
1236 *Lik to this world, because attemp[e]raunce*  
*Is\* set aside and hath no\* gouernaunce.*
- Venus, of loueres emperesse & queene,  
Of vicious lustis lady and maystresse,  
Hir metal coper, that wil ternyssh grene,  
1240 *A chaungable colour, contrarye to sadnesse,*  
*A notabil figur of worldli brotilnesse,*  
*Lik gery Venus, because attemp[e]raunce*  
*Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.*

This Golden World lasted until Jupiter put his father out of his kingdom, and then temperance was set aside.

The metal of Mars is strong and inflexible, and the sword of rigour furious and full of vengeance.

Lead is called leprous gold, tin is dull of sound, and mercury false and fugitive.

The Golden World was governed by reason, but the world of iron by cruelty; the present world is full of duplicity, like the moon.

Venus' metal is copper, that tarnishes green, a changeable colour, a figure of worldly mutability.

1222. hir] his H, R 3.

1223. Leed] Bed H.

1224. craishyng R, J.

1227. The] This R. 1228. sith H, R.

1236. Is] Was B — hath no] lost hir B.

1243. hir] his H.

- My author  
Bochas com-  
plained on the  
cumbrous  
gluttony of  
Vitellius and  
his two fellow  
emperors,  
notorious for  
their debauch-  
ery.
- Myn auctour Bochas gan pitousli compleyne 1244  
On the disordynat comerous glotonye  
Of Vitellius & his felawes tweyne,  
Alle thre diffoulid with horrible lecherye,  
Diffamed be sclandre, noised for ther ribaudie,\* 1248  
Contrarious enmyes echon tatemperaunce,  
Banshed fro ther court[es], myhte haue no govern-  
aunce.
- Gluttony and  
drunkenness  
cause fevers,  
podagra, gout  
and horrible  
gangrenous  
sores.
- Of glotonie & riotous excesse, [p. 358]  
Wach & reuel & drynkyng al the niht 1252  
Kometh vnkouþ feueres & many gret accesse,  
Membres potagre mak[th] men thei go nat riht,  
Goutes, mormalles horrible to the siht,  
Many infirmytes, because attemperaunce 1256  
Was nat of counsail toward ther gouernaunce.
- Prudence was  
banished from  
their court;  
sobreness,  
truth and  
righteousness  
stood aside.
- Out of ther court ban[y]shed was prudence,  
Fortitudo had non interesse  
Geyn vicious lyuyng to make resistence, 1260  
Cried woluis hed was vertuous sobirnesse;  
Trouthe durst nat medle, abak stood rihtwisesse,  
Put out of houshold was attemperaunce,  
With these thre emperours koude haue no gouernaunce.
- John the Bap-  
tist lived in  
the desert  
and ate mel  
sylvester and  
locusts.  
His cook was  
temperance.
- ¶ Sone of the prophete callid Zacharie, 1265  
The patriark, the holi man Seynt Iohn,  
Victorious champioun of gredi glotonye,  
Lyued in desert, deyntes hadde he non, 1268  
Et mel siluestre, lay on the colde ston,  
Locustas gadred; his cook was temp[e]raunce  
And of his houshold had al the gouernaunce.
- His clothes  
were woven of  
camel's hair,  
and he lived  
on honey-  
suckles and  
drank spring  
water.
- Of kamel heris was wouen his clothyng, 1272  
Record the Gospell that kan the trouthe tell,  
Honsyokeles his moderat feedyng,  
Mong wilde beestis whan he dide duell;  
To staunche his thrust drank watir of þe well, 1276  
This blissid Baptist, roote of attempraunce,  
Set for cheff merour of al good gouernaunce.

1245. comberous H.

1248. be] with H — for ther ribaudie] be þer lecherye B —  
for ther] with H.

1254. podagre R, R 3, P. 1261. Cryed woluyssh was H 5.

1264. Emperour H. 1266. holi] manly H.

1269. Et mel siluestre] Did eat wild honey P.

1270. Locustes P. 1275. Mong] Among H.

- Of his diete catour was scarsete,  
 His costful foode was vertuouſ abſtynence, 1280  
 Rootis of deſert his delicat plente,  
 His riche pymentis, [his] ipocras of diſpenſe  
 Heeng nat in coſtretis nor botelis in þe ſpence, —  
 Nat exceſſiff, becauſe attemperaunce 1284  
 Hadde of his houſhold hooli þe gouernaunce.
- Thus Baptist Iohn bi his moderat foode  
 The cheef tryumphe of abſtynence hath begunne,  
 This patriark[e] rekned oon the goode, 1288  
 Content with lital, al ſuffiſaunce hath wonne,  
 As Diogenes in his lital tonne  
 Heeld hym appaied, becauſe attemperaunce  
 Hadde of his houſhold al the gouernaunce. 1292
- His tonne to hym was receit & houſhold;  
 And yif I ſholde booste of his celeer,  
 Ther wer no cuppis of ſiluer nor of gold;  
 His costful vyntage cam fro the ryueer: 1296  
 Weel tymed meſour was for his mouth botleer,  
 And his taſtour was attemperaunce,  
 Which of his houſhold had al þe gouernaunce.
- His conquest was mor ſouerayn of degre 1300  
 Than Alisaundris, for al his hih renoun;  
 For he conquered his ſensualite,  
 Made hym ſogot & ſeruaunt to reſoun,  
 Daunted of prudence ech foreyn paſſioun, 1304  
 His clerk of kechene callid attemperaunce,  
 Which of his diete had al þe gouernaunce.
- Of ſuperfluite, of ſlouthe & of ſleepe  
 This Diogenes ſtood euer among in dreede; 1308  
 Of worldli fauour he took no maner keepe;  
 Strauh was his liteer, a ſymple ruſſet weede:  
 Turnid his tonne ageyn the wynd in deede,  
 Tween hot and cold[e], that attemperaunce 1312  
 In ſomer & wyntir had hool the gouernaunce.

Scarcity was his caterer, and his food virtuous abstinence and roots of the desert.

He began by moderate diet, the chief triumph of abstinence, and was as content with little as Diogenes in his hog'shead,

who had no cellar or cups of silver and gold. His vintages came from the river, and moderation was his butler.

His conquest of his senses was greater than the triumphs of Alexander.

His bed was of straw, his garment russet; and he turned his tun according to the wind, and let temperance rule in summer and winter.

1281. his] he H.  
 1283. nat] om. R.  
 1297. his mouth] þe tyme H.  
 1313. hool] om. R.

## ¶ Lenvoye.

Noble Princes,  
The Golden  
World is turned  
to lead. Pray  
God to send  
down his grace,  
that temper-  
ance may  
govern your  
households.

**N**OBLE Princis, of prudence takith heed  
This litil chapitle breefli to *comprehende*:  
The goldene world is turnid into led; 1316  
Praieth to God his grace down to sende  
Of his hih mercy, that it may soone amende,  
And that this princesse callid *attemperauunce*  
May of your housholdis han the *gouernaunce*. 1320

Chiefly for love,  
but also for  
fear, attend  
diligently to his  
precepts; for  
those who of  
old ruled by  
temperance  
prospered.

Cheefli for loue, parcel eek for dreed,  
In your estat whan ye be most shynende,  
For your ences & your most gracious speed,  
To his preseptis doth dilligentli attende, 1324  
Of olde emperour[e]s reedeth the legende:  
Whil thei wer reuled be *attemperauunce*  
In long prosperite stood ther *gouernaunce*.

While temper-  
ance and her  
three sisters  
held away, Rome  
defied its  
enemies.

Of worldli kyngdames Roome is callid hed, 1328  
Whos roial boundis ferthest out extende  
In marcial actis, bothe in lengthe & breed,  
*Rem Publicam* bi prowesse to diffende,  
No foreyn enmy hardi to offende 1332  
Ther hih noblesse, whil *attemp[e]raunce*  
With hir thre sustren hadde\* ther *gouernaunce*.

[How the kynrede of Iacob was destroyed / Crist  
born and deied / Ierusalem destroyed, & xj<sup>c</sup> M<sup>l</sup>  
slayn bi suerde, hunger, fire & pestilence.]<sup>1</sup>

After the stories  
of Vitellius,  
Galba and  
Otho, a great  
number of the  
descendants of  
Jacob came to  
Bochas

**T**HE stori eendid of Vitellyus, [p. 359]  
Of his too feeris Galba & Ottho, 1336  
How his careyn horrible & hidous,  
Drownid in Tibre, was possid to & fro.  
Afftir the[r] stori [a]complished was & do,  
Cam gret noumbre to Bochas, as I reede, 1340  
Echon descendid of Iacobis hih kynrede.

like dismayed  
people, clad in  
mourning and  
wet with tears.

In tokne of compleynt & of heuynesse,  
Lik folk dismaied, clad in moornynge weede,  
For the constreynt of ther wrechidnesse, 1344

1314. goode heede R.

1316. The] This R — into] in R. 1319. thes prynces R.

1323. &] & for H. 1334. hadde] hadden B.

1337. their Careyns H. 1338. was] om. H.

1342. tokne] toke H — 2nd of] om. H.

1343. dismaied] diffamyd R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 147 verso.



- Bespreynt with teres, quakyng in *per* dreede,  
 Cunnyng no recour in so streit a neede,  
 Resembling folk be toknis ful mortall  
 That wer toward sum\* feeste funerall. 1348
- Ther ougli cheeris pitous to beholde,  
 As thei gan aprochen the presence  
 Of Iohn Bochas to telle ther sorwes olde,  
 Ther woundis bleedyng, be marcial violence, 1352  
 Oppressid with hunger, thrust, sodeyn pestilence,  
 Be foreyn suerd ther lyuys manacyng,  
 Vpon the deth as beestis abidyng,
- That wer enclosed narwe in a folde, 1356  
 Disespereid socour to recure,  
 To passe ther boundis for dreed thei wer nat bold,  
 Withynne enfamyne[d], bareyn of al pasture; —  
 This woful stori remembrid in\* scripture, 1360  
 How that of Iacob the generacioun  
 Was vengabli brouht to dest[r]ucciouun.
- This patriark callid whilom Israel,  
 Most rennommed among al naciouns 1364  
 And most famous, the Bible can weel tell,  
 Ther lyne out reknid thoruhout al regiouns,  
 Be goddis beheste took ther pecessiouns,  
 Maugre Egipcians & Pharaoes pride, 1368  
 Whan duk Moises be God was maad *per* guide.
- With dreye feet thei passed the Rede Se,  
 Conueyed be Moises & also be Aaron.  
 Ther lawe was write, the Bible who list see, 1372  
 Vpon Syna in tables of hard ston.  
 And thoruh desert as thei dide gon,  
 With aungelis mete callid manna, as I reede,  
 Fourti wyntir ther he did hem feede. 1376
- Afftir Moises, lad be Iosue  
 Into the lond[e] of promyscioun,  
 The tuelue lynages of Iacob ther, parde,  
 He leet make a distribucioun, 1380  
 And to ech lyne he gaff his porcioun,  
 Bi promys maad afforn to Habraham,  
 To Isaak, Iacob, whan thei thidir cam.

1346. Cunnyng] knowyng J, P, H 5.

1348.] Toward that wer sum feeste funerall R — sum] the B.

1360. in] be B.

1367. pecessioun H. 1382. Abraham H, R, J.

Their ugly  
 faces were  
 piteous to  
 look upon,  
 their wounds  
 bleeding; op-  
 pressed with  
 hunger, thirst,  
 pestilence and  
 the sword of  
 foreigners,

they awaited  
 death like  
 sheep in  
 a fold, and  
 lacked all  
 courage to  
 escape.

They were  
 once the most  
 renowned of  
 nations, as the  
 Bible can tell;  
 and in spite  
 of the pride of  
 Pharaoh,

they crossed  
 the Red Sea  
 dry shod, and  
 received the  
 law at Sinai,  
 written on  
 tablets of hard  
 stone.

They lived for  
 40 years on  
 angel's food;  
 and after  
 Moses' death  
 Joshua led  
 them into the  
 Promised  
 Land.

Ruled by  
mighty dukes  
and judges,  
they prospered;  
and at last,  
when in their  
pride they  
wanted a king,  
Saul was  
chosen.

Bi patriarkes [&] prophetis that wer sad, 1384  
Maugre ther enmyes & ther mortal foon,  
Be mihti dukes & iuges thei wer lad,  
Gat al the regiouns wher thei dide gon,  
Til at the laste, of pride thei echon 1388  
Lik othir naciouns wolden haue a kyng.  
Saul was chose; God grauntid þer askyng.

Finally David  
became king,  
and of his line  
Jesus was born.

Thus be patriarkes & be ther allies,  
From Abraham the gen[e]alogie, 1392  
Tolde be prophetis & be ther prophesies,  
Conueied to Daudid, which in his regalie  
Heeld of Iewes al hool the monarchie,  
Of whos kynreede bi processe, thus it stood, 1396  
Was Crist Iesu born of that roial blood.

who became in-  
carnate for our  
salvation and  
suffered martyr-  
dom under  
Herod.

Sent from his fader, as prophetis\* determyne,  
Took flesh & blood for our sauacioun,  
Be the Hooli Goost born of a peur virgyne, 1400  
Hadde among Iewes gret tribulacioun,  
Vndir Herodes suffrid passioun,  
And as the Gospell treuli doth descryue,  
The thridde day [he] roos fro deth to lyue. 1404

This blessed  
Lord was born  
at the end of  
December in  
Bethlehem, and  
shewn to three  
kings by a  
starbeam; and  
the same Jesus  
was afterwards  
condemned by  
Pilate to die on  
Calvary.

This blissid Lord, this Lord of most vertu,  
Eende of Decembre born [sothly] in Bethlem,  
And be the aungel namyd was Iesu,  
Shewed to thre kynges bi a sterre bem, — 1408  
This same Ihesus in Iherusalem  
Bi conspiracioun of Iewes thoruh envie,  
Be Pilat dempt to deie on Caluarie.

Thus the  
Jews were  
unkind to him;  
and for that  
they were  
nearly all de-  
stroyed.

Thus onto Ihesu Iewes wer vnkynde, 1412  
For which thei wern destroyed nih echon.  
Crist prophecied, the Gospel maketh mynde,  
How of ther cite ther shold nat leue a ston  
Vpon another; for ther mortal foon 1416  
Shold hem besege, he told hem so certeyn,  
And make Iherusalem with the soil al pleyn.

Sin was the  
cause; for when  
Jesus came to  
save them, they  
did not know  
him.

With weepyng eyen Crist told hem so beform\* [p. 360]  
Of ther ruyne and destruccioun; 1420  
Synne was cause sothli that thei wer lorn:  
For thei nat\* knew, to ther confusioun,

1384. &] om. R. 1392. genelogie R, genologie J, Genealogye H.  
1398. prophetis] poetis B. 1407. the] om. R.  
1419. beform] afforn B. 1420. and] & their H.  
1422. nat] ne B.

- Tyme of ther notable visitacioun,  
 Whan Crist cam down, born heer in erthe lowe 1424  
 For ther sauacioun, — thei list hym nat to knowe.
- Thretti yeer ful cronicleeres write  
 And sumwhat mor, aftir his passioun,  
 Among the Iewes, pleynli to endite, 1428  
 Withynne hem-silff fill a dyuysioun.  
 Moordrers ros up *witbynne* ther owne toun,  
 So gret a noumbre, *with* many an homycide,  
 That in ther cite no man durst weel abide. 1432
- Ther presidentis regnyng in Iude  
 Seyng this horrible foul rebelloun  
 And of moordreris the mortal cruelte  
 That long endured in that regeoun, — 1436  
 Which for tappese Romeyns sente down  
 Vespasian *with* many a manli kniht,  
 Which into Gallile took his weie riht.
- And to chastise tho moordreris & robbours,  
 Brente ther contre as he rood up & down, 1440  
 So contynued *with* his soudiours  
 Til onto tyme the contres environ  
 Of Iherusalem entred be the toun 1444  
 With ther oblaciouns in many sondri wise,  
 As Pask requered, to do ther sacrefise.
- Tofor tho daies was Iherusalem  
 Hadde in gret worshep of al naciouns, 1448  
 Callid *princesse* of eueri othir rew, m,  
 Whos fame strechid thoruhout al regions,  
 Ther tresor gret and ther pecessiouns,  
 Double wallid, of beeldyng most notable, 1452  
 Dreedynge non enmy, for it was impreuable.
- Among Romeyns was many a manli man  
 Willyng echon of oon affeccioun,  
 Thoruh the knihthod of Vespasian, 1456  
 Echon to labour to the destruccioun  
 Of Iherusalem; for gret dyuysioun  
 Among hem-silf was gunne in the cite  
 Bi certeyn capteyns wer in noumbre thre. 1460

Thirty years after the Passion the Jews became divided among themselves, and there were so many murders that no man dared abide in the city.

The Romans sent down Vespasian to restore order,

and he laid waste the country at the time the people entered Jerusalem to make their paschal sacrifices.

Jerusalem was then called the princess of realms, rich in treasure, double walled, and almost impregnable.

The Romans were willing to fight hard to win the city, which was divided against itself.

1425. to] *om.* H.

1426. yeer] yeers R — cronicleeres] cronyclis H, cronycles R 3, cronyculeers R, J. 1430. vp ros R. 1431. an ombre H.

1432. ther] that R, the J, P — weel] *om.* R.

1439. Gallile] Gaule H. 1451. Ther] The R. 1458. gret] their H.

The tyrants  
Simon, John  
and Eleazar  
were enemies;  
and there was  
war both with-  
out and within.

Symon, Iohn and Eleazarus,  
Horrible tirauntes oppressing þe poraille,  
Of gouernaunce froward and outraious,  
Falsli deuided ech othir dide assaille, 1464  
Among hem-silf had many gret\* bataille:  
Werre withoute & werre was withynne;  
Thus of vengauunce myscheef dide gynne.

Vespasian tried  
to make peace  
among them,  
but in vain.  
Returning to  
Rome as em-  
peror,

Vespasian nat beyng rek[e]les, 1468  
For his partie lik a prudent kniht  
Be notable menys excited hem to pes;  
But al for nouht; blente ther owne siht;  
To cheese the beste thei koude nat seen ariht. 1472  
And in this while, this noble werreyour  
Vespasian was chosen emperour.

he appointed  
his son Titus  
to succeed him  
in Judaea.  
Jerusalem was  
besieged  
and starved.

Bi Alisandre to Roome he went ageyn,\*  
Resceyued ther thymperial dignite. 1476  
His sone Titus he made his cheef capteyn,  
His procuratour, to gouerne in Iude,  
Besette envircoun Iherusalem the cite,  
With men of armys seged it so aboute 1480  
That non myhte entre nor non myhte issen oute.

One woman is  
said to have  
roasted her  
child for lack  
of victuals,  
which was too  
horrible a deed!

Stopped ther conduites & ther watris cleer,  
Enfamyned hem for lakkyng of vitaille.  
A certeyn woman, thus seith the cronicleer, 1484  
Rosted hir child whan vitaille did[e] faille, —  
She hadde of stoor non othir apparaille, —  
Theron be leiseer hirsilf she dide feede,  
Which in a woman was to horrible a deede! 1488

The walls were  
beaten down by  
engines and  
two strong  
towers taken.

Ther myhti wallis *with* gunnes wer cast down,  
Too stronge tour[e]s take of ther cite,  
Resistance gan faillen in the toun,  
Thei stood of hunger in swich perplexite. 1492  
Titus of knihthod and magnanymyte,  
Thoruhout the tour callid Antonyan  
Is entrid in lik a knihtli man.

1464. ech] echon H.

1465. gret] strong B.

1469. prudent] manly H.

1472. seen] chese H.

1473. noble] notable H.

1475. went ageyn] was sent B. 1483. lak H.

1485. vitailles R.

- The people in streetis lay for hunger ded, 1496 The people lay dead for hunger in the streets: their story can be read in Iosephus.
- To beye nor selle no lyffode in the toun;
- Ther was no\* socour nouthur of drynk nor bred
- In peyne of deth born nouthur up nor down.
- Vomyt of oon was the refeccioun 1500
- Vnto another; ther was such scarsete,
- Who redeth Iosephus, the trouthe he\* may þer see.
- Brent was the temple maad first be Salamon, [p. 361] 1504 The temple, which had stood for 1200 years, was burnt
- Which had endured, thus writ the cronicleer,
- That was so roial bilt of riche ston,
- Fulli a thousand & too hundred yeer.
- Romeyns entred maugre ther porteer
- With spere, pollex & suerdis sharp[e] whette, 1508
- Lik wode leouns slouh whom that thei mette.
- Ther riche gatis curid with plate of gold together with its rich gates covered with plates of gold, and its silver images.
- Wer brente and molte withoute excepcioun;
- The siluer images that forgid wer of old, 1512
- The violent feer made hem renne down.
- Noble Titus hadde compassioun,
- His marcial dukis spared nothyng certeyn,
- List of presumpcioun thei wolde\* rebelle ageyn. 1516
- Eleuene hundrid thousand wer ther slayn
- Bi suerd, bi hunger, fyr and pestilence;
- Stynk of kareyns that in streetis layn
- Caused of deth most sodeyn violence; 1520
- And Titus gaff among hem this sentence
- I meene of them that dide alyue duell —
- For a peny men sholde thretti sell.
- So as Iudas sold Crist for thretti pens, 1524 Titus commanded the survivors to be sold to the Saracens at thirty for a penny, as Jesus had once been sold by Judas for thirty pence.
- Titus ageyn thouhte of equite,
- Of marchaundise to make recompense,
- Thretti Iewes founde in the cite
- For a peny, & for no mor, parde, 1528
- Thei to be sold for ther gret outrage,
- Euer among Sarsyns to lyuen in seruage.
- Of the temple a preest that was ful olde,
- Too statli lanternis, that wer ful briht & sheene, 1532
- Tables, basynes, violes of briht golde
- He presented; & thus he dede meene:
1498. no] non B, R. 1499. nouthur] neithir R — nor] ne H.
1502. Iosephus] Ioseph R — he] ye B, R, om. J — þer] om. J.
1505. riche ston] lyme & stoone H. 1510. Ther] The H.
1516. wolde] list B. 1518. 2nd bi] & H. 1525. of] it H.

- That ther tresour sholde weel be seene  
Of the temple & shewed to Titus 1536  
In tokne it was whilom so glorious.
- he shewed also  
silk and frankin-  
cense and the  
purple vest-  
ments and rich  
pectoral of the  
high priest.
- To shewe eek ther he dede his besi cure,  
Silk synamome, franc-ensens withal,  
For sacrefise the purpurat vesture, 1540  
*With* Thymyame, the riche pectoral,  
Which ordeyned wern in especial  
For the solempne place of placis all,  
Sancta sanctorum, & so men dide it call. 1544
- A prince of the  
city named  
John came to  
Titus, pale with  
hunger; and  
Simon was  
brought to him  
by duke  
Terence.
- Of the cite a prince callid Iohn  
To Titus cam & shewed his presence,  
Pale for hunger; ther cam also Symon,  
Brouht be a duk that namyd was Terence, 1548  
Clad in purpil, brouht be violence,  
Resceyued of Titus whan this noble toun,  
Castellis, tours & wallis wer smet down.
- Eleazar fled;  
but, trapped  
in a castle, he  
incited all who  
were with him  
to slay one  
another.
- Into a castell callid Mazadan 1552  
Eleazarus hadde take his fliht.  
Besegid of Seilla or he the castel wan,  
This Eleazar lik a furious kniht  
Withynne the castell the silue same niht 1556  
Sterid eueri man, fadir, child & brothir,  
*With* sharp[e] suerdis ech man to slen othir.
- Thus Jerusalem,  
most stately of  
building, was  
destroyed.
- Thus was this\* cite, most statli of beeldyng,  
That whilom was of this world cheef toun, 1560  
Wher Melchisedek regned, preest & kyng,  
Be daies olde, as maad is mencionn,  
Restorid be Dauyd, bilt newe of Salamoun,  
Princesse of prouynces, was nowher\* such anoþer; 1564  
Now is it\* abiect and refus of al othir.
- Jesus gave the  
Jews thirty  
years respite  
before he took  
vengeance; for  
the Lord has  
joy when  
sinners are con-  
trite and repent:
- Vnto the Iewes Crist Iesus gaf respiht,  
Full thretti yeer[e] or he took vengauce,  
In tokne the Lord hath ioie & gret delite, 1568  
Whan that synneres dispose hem to penaunce  
Be contricioun and hertli repentaunce.  
This blissid Lord, this Lord most merciable  
Lengest abideth or he list be vengable. 1572

1537. so] om. R. 1540. the] of H.

1544. R misplaces here: "Which ordeyned wer in especiall."

1551. Castell R.

1559. this] the B. 1562, 63 are transposed in H.

1564. nowher] neuer B.

1565. is it] it is B — it] om. R. 1571. 2nd Lord] kyng R.

- He was to them so gracious & benigne,  
 Bood that thei sholde to hym conuerte soone,  
 Shewed onto hem many an vnkouth signe:  
 Duryng tuelue daies eclipsed was the moone; 1576  
 The people astoned, knew nat what was to doone,  
 But indurat in ther froward entent,  
 Lik folk abashed wist nat what it mente.
- Affor the siege, or Titus gan the werre, 1580  
 Ouer the cite, wherof thei wex afferd,  
 Ther appeered a comeete & a sterre.  
 The sterre was shape lich a large suerd;  
 Touchyng the comeete, ther was neuer herd 1584  
 Of swich another, so fyri, briht and cleer,  
 Which endured the space of al a yeer.
- Ther festyual day halwid in Aprill, [p. 362]  
 Ther preestis besi to make oblacioun, 1588  
 So gret a liht the temple dide fill,  
 That al the people stondyng enviroun  
 Thouhte it so briht in ther inspeccioun,  
 Passyng the sunne, as it dide seeme; 1592  
 But what it mente no man koude deeme.
- As the preestis dide ther besi cure  
 To offre a calff, anon or thei took heede,  
 The same calff — a thyng ageyn nature — 1596  
 Brouht forth a lamb, the same tyme I reede;  
 An ougli tokne, which put\* hem in gret dreede,  
 A contrarie\* pronosticacioun,  
 Shewed onto them of ther subuersioun, 1600
- With othir toknis froward & contrarye  
 The\* same tyme wer shewed euer among;  
 The brasen dores of the inward seyntuarye, 1604  
 With iren barres shet, that wer most strong,  
 Brood of entaille, round and wonder long,  
 That myht nat meue *with* thretti mennys miht,  
 Opned by hymself twies on o niht.

and although  
 he was  
 gracious to  
 them and  
 shewed them  
 strange signs  
 of what was  
 to come,  
 the people re-  
 mained obdur-  
 ate.

Before the  
 siege a fiery  
 comet  
 appeared over  
 the city,  
 and a star  
 shaped like a  
 large sword;

and on their  
 festival day in  
 April a light  
 shone brighter  
 than the sun  
 in the temple.

As the priests  
 offered up a  
 calf it brought  
 forth a lamb,  
 which was an  
 evil omen.

There were  
 other froward  
 signs: the  
 heavy brazen  
 doors of the  
 sanctuary  
 opened of  
 themselves  
 thrice on one  
 night.

1585. such H, R, J.  
 1587. Ther] The H.  
 1594. the] ther R.  
 1598. put] took B.  
 1599. contraire B.  
 1602. The] Ther B.  
 1605. round] wide H.  
 1607. thries vpon a H.

- Chariots were  
seen in the air  
and men-at-  
arms with  
gleaming swords  
and shining  
armour, who  
made a feint  
to assault the  
city;
- Ther wer seyn also charis in the hair, 1608  
Men of armes *with* briht suerdes cleere,  
Of plate and maile [ther] armure was so fair,  
Briht as Phebus wher thei dide appeere.  
And as the stori also doth vs lere, 1612  
*With* ther sheltrouns & ther apparail,  
A proffre maad Iherusalem for tassail.
- and one night  
the priests  
heard a dread-  
ful sound in  
the temple,  
which ended in  
the awful words,  
"Let each of  
us arise and  
go hence."
- To the Iewes it dide signefe  
A pronostik of ther destruccioun. 1616  
Preestis to the temple as thei dide hem hie  
Vpon a niht to doon oblacioun,  
Amyd the temple was herd a dreedful soun;  
Of which[e] noise this was the feerful eende: 1620  
"Rys up echon, & let vs hen[ne]s weende."
- Four years  
before the  
siege one  
Ananias, the  
dull son of  
a peasant, ran  
through the  
city in a  
frenzy, shouting.
- And ful foure yeer tofor the siege gan  
Oon Ananyas, yong & tendre of age,  
Of his berthe sone of a rud[e] man, 1624  
Be disposicioun dul of his corage,  
Lich as he hadde fallen in a rage  
Ran in the cite bamaner frenesie,  
Spared nat *with* open mouth to crie. 1628
- "A voice out  
of the east,  
the south, the  
north, the west,  
a voice from  
the four winds  
cries out  
against Jeru-  
salem,
- Vnto this noise was maad[e] non obstakle,  
But obstynat euere in his entent,  
Day of the feeste holde in the Thabernacle,  
"A vois," quod he, "out of the orient, 1632  
Vois fro the south, fro north & occident,  
Vois fro foure wyndis that blowe so brod & wide,  
Vois geyn\* Iherusalem crieth out *on* euery side!
- against the  
temple, against  
the people,  
husbands and  
wives: woe to  
Jerusalem with  
a treble woe!"
- Vois geyn\* the temple, ageyn the peepel also, 1636  
Vois ageyn husbondis, vois ageyn *per* wyues:  
Wo to Iherusalem with a treble wo  
Of hunger, thrust & leesying of *per* lyues, —  
Of suerd & fyr, and many sodeyn stryues!" 1640  
This was the wrecchid lamentacioun  
Which Anany cried thoruhout the toun.

1608. seyn] slayn R.

1610. ther] *om.* H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P, the Sl.

1614. Iherusalem] ther Cite Ierusalem R, J, R 3.

1619. herd] made H. 1620. feerful] dredefull R, J.

1634. fro foure] fro the R — blowe] blew R.

1635. geyn] ageyn B. 1636. geyn] ageyn B.

1637. 2nd ageyn] geyn R. 1638. 1st Wo] Who R.

1642. thoruhout] thoruh H, R, R 3, thurh J, H 5, through P.



Bete he was for his* affray ful ofte, Whippid, scoorgid eendlong & upriht, Al-wer-it so he felte [it] ful vnsofte, Was bi betyng maad feynt & feeble of myht, He stynte nat to crie so day & niht, A pronostik shewyng to the cite, How that riht soone it sholde destroyed be.	1644	Although he was often beaten for his clamour, he did not cease to cry day and night.
Be rehersaile also of Carnotence, With that cite for synne it stood so tho, That yif Romeyns be marcial violence Hadde nat komen & doon hem al this wo, The erthe sholde han opnid & ondo, Deuoured the people, void of al refuge, Or drowned the toun be sum sodeyn deluge.	1648	And John of Salisbury said that it then stood so with the city for sin, that if the Romans had not come, the earth would have opened and swallowed it.
Breefli to passe, this vengauce most terrible Doon upon Iewes for ther transgressioun, For ther demerites the punshyng most horrible, Of Iherusalem fynal subuersioun, Of the temple, tabernacle & toun, In Iosephus, who list seen al the deede, — <i>De bello Iudaico</i> , the surplus he may* reede.	1652	But you can read all about the end of Jerusalem in Josephus.
	1660	
	1663	

¶ **Explicit liber Septimus.**

1643. his] this B, R 3, H 5. 1645. it] om. R, J, H 5, P.  
 1651. for synne] om. R. 1655. peeplis H.  
 1663. he may the surplus B.



## BOOK VIII

### ¶ Incipit Prologus libri octaui.

- B**OCHAS makth heer an exclamacioun: [p. 363] Bochas  
exclaims  
 Ageyn the Iewes gret vnkyndenesse against the  
 Rouht be the Romeyns, þer cite & þer toun, great unkind-  
ness done to  
 Lich as the stori did heer-toform expresse, — the Jews by 4 the Romans, in  
 Thei disparpiled to lyue in wrechchidnesse, punishment by  
 Bi Goddes hand punished for ther outrage, God's hand for  
 For euere [to] lyue in tribut & seruage. their outrages.
- Folwyng myn auctour, I caste for to touche 8 Afterwards,  
 So as I can, rehersyng the maneere lying on his  
 How Iohn Bochas liggyng on his couche bed he spoke  
 Spak to hymself & saide as ye shal heere, to himself,  
 "Whi artow now so dul of look & cheere, asking, "Why  
 Lik a man, thi face berth witnessse, are you so dull  
 That hym disposeth to lyue\* in idilnesse?" and idle?" 12
- "Certis," quod Iohn, "I tak[e] riht good keep, "Certainly,"  
 Of myche trauaile that the outrage said John,"it 16 seems to me  
 Hath be long slombre cast me in a sleep, that the  
 My lymys feeble, crokid & feynt for age, weariness of  
 Cast in a dreed, for dulnesse of corage, great labour  
 For to presume vpon me to take has overcome 20 me. I am old,  
 Of the eihte book an eende for to make." and dread to  
take up the  
task of finishing  
the Eighth  
Book."
- "Thow wenist parauntir in thyn oppynyoun "Perhaps you  
 Bi this labour to gete the a name, think you can  
 For to reherse the sodeyn fallyng doun, get yourself a 24 name by this  
 And be sum newe processe for to attame, labour, and in  
 Of princes\* sittyng hih in the Hous of Fame, some new  
 In dyuers bookis, wher thou maist hem fynde, manner enter  
 Perpetuelly to putte thi name in mynde. the House of 28 Fame.

3. þer (both)] þe R. 4. the] their H.  
 7. to] om. R.  
 12. now] om. R, J.  
 14. lyuen B, R.  
 17. Hath] hast H.  
 26. princes] Princessis B, J, P.

- "Your remain-  
 ing days are  
 so few, that  
 you are dis-  
 couraged. Re-  
 member that  
 when men are  
 buried low in  
 the earth there  
 is no reward  
 but of good  
 living.
- Thi daies shorte putte the in gret[e] dreed  
 Of swich a labour to take the passage,  
 The mor feeble the slowere is thi speed,  
 Thi\* sihte dirkid; & thou art falle in age; 32  
 Among remembryng, thynk on this langage:  
 Whan men be buried lowe in the erthe doun,  
 Sauf of good lyuyng, farweel al guerdoun.
- "Worldly  
 goods shall  
 pass, wealth  
 and knowledge  
 shall be for-  
 gotten, friend-  
 ship changes  
 like the moon;  
 but a good  
 name left  
 behind exceeds  
 all riches.
- Worldli goodis shal passe, & that riht soone, 36  
 Tresour, kun[n]yng and al shal out of mynde;  
 Frenshep chaungeth as doth the cloudi moone;  
 At a streiht neede fewe freendis men do fynde.  
 But a good name whan it is lefft behynde 40  
 Passeth al richesse, yif it be weel disserued,  
 And al gold in coffre lokkid & conseruyd.
- "Your labour  
 too shall grow  
 dim."  
 "Sloth spoke  
 to me and  
 bade me cease  
 to labour: 'for  
 your reward  
 shall be small.'"
- Of thi labour, the same shal wexe derk;  
 Bewar Bochas, & heerof tak good heed." 44  
 "Slouthe spak to me, and bad me leue werk:  
 For a smal reward thou shalt haue for þi meede,  
 As be example thou maist othir reede."  
 This was the langage, I hadde therof routhe, 48  
 Atween Iohn Bochas and this ladi Slouthe.
- Bochas hung  
 his head and  
 was perplexed,  
 knowing
- Bochas astoned, gan doun his hed enclyne,  
 Vpon his pilwe lay hangyng in a traunce,  
 Stoode in gret doute, koude nat determyne, 52  
 Lik a man hangyng in ballaunce,  
 To what parti he sholde his penne auaunce  
 To procede as he vndirtook,  
 Or leue the labour of his eihte book. 56
- not what to  
 do, when  
 Francis  
 Petrarch, the  
 laureate poet,  
 came and sat  
 down at his  
 bedside.
- Atwix[e] tweyne abidyng thus a while,  
 What was to doone in doute he gan fleete,  
 Halff withynne & half ouer the stile,  
 Koude nat discernen to hym what was most meete, 60  
 Til Fraunceis Petrak, the laureat poete,  
 Crownid with laurer, grace was his gide,  
 Cam and set hym doun bi his beddis side.

32. Thi] The B, R, J, R 3, P.

33. this] thi R.

40. name] Fame H. 49. this] þe H.

50. inclyne R, declyne H. 52. in] in a R.

53. in abalaunce R, in a ballance H 5.

58. What] That R — to fleete R, J.

63. bed side H.

- And as Bochas out of his slombre abraide  
 And gan adawen sumwhat of his cheere,  
 And sauh Petrak, lowli to hym he saide:  
 "Wolkome maister, crownid with laureer,  
 Which han Itaille lik a sunne cleer  
 With poetrie, pleynli to descryue,  
 Most soueraynli enlumyned bi your\* lyue, —
- I haue desired, as it is weel kouth,  
 Of riht hool\* herte be humble attendaunce,  
 To doon you worshep fro\* my tendre youth,  
 And so shal euere, void of al variaunce,  
 Duryng my lyff; for treuli in substauce  
 Ye haue\* been lanterne, liht and direccioun  
 Ay to supporte myn ocupacioun,
- As in writyng bookis to compile,  
 Cheeff examplaire to my gret auantage,  
 To reforme the rudnesse of my stile  
 With aureat colours of your fressh langage.  
 But now fordullid be impotence of age,  
 Of decrepitus markid with many a signe,  
 My labour up of writyng I resigne.
- I cast[e] me nat ferther\* to proceede, [p. 364]  
 Stonde at abay fordryue with\* werynesse."  
 Quod Franseis Petrak, "leese nat thus thi meede:  
 Yif men no cause to reporte nor expresse,  
 In thi laste age thou hast founde a maistrësse  
 Which hath the bridled in sooth (& þat is routhe)  
 And halt thi rene, and she is callid Slouthe.
- An euident tokne of froward slogardie,  
 Vpon thi bed thi lymes so to dresse.  
 Ris up! for shame! for I can weel espie,  
 Folk that can grone & feele no seeknesse,  
 Ther chaumbirleyn is callid Idilnesse,  
 Which leith thi pilwe at euen & at morwe,—  
 Void hir fro the, and let hir go with sorwe!

64 At this Bochas started up and said, "Welcome, Master, who, like a bright sun, illumined Italy with poetry.

68

"From my tender youth I have done you worship. You have been my guide and example,

72

76

reforming the rudeness of my style with your fresh language.  
 80 "But now I am grown old

80

84

and stand at bay, oppressed by weariness." Said Petrarch, "Do not lose your reward thus. Men will say, in your old age you found a mistress, Sloth, who bridled you.

88

"Get up; I know people who groan when they feel no illness. Your handmaiden is idleness,

92

96

68. han] shan R. 70. your] hir B.

72. riht hool] rihtful B, R.

73. fro] for B. 76. han B.

85. ferther] foorth B, R, P, forth J.

86. with] for B, R, J.

90. &] in R, om. H. 92. froward] rowarde H.

97. thi] þe H.

who is most  
contrary to all  
virtue and has  
drawn you  
away from your  
library.

To al vertu most froward & contrarye  
Is Idilnesse heer in this present lyff, 100  
Which hath the drawe away fro thi librarie,  
Wil the nat suffre to be contemplatiff;  
For hir condicioun is to holde striff  
With euery vertuous occupacioun, 104  
Which men sholde voide of wisdam & resoun.

"Arouse yourself  
and open your  
eyes!  
"Remember the  
Book of the  
Life Solitary,  
which teaches  
virtue, and,  
as I said  
before, look up  
and get out of  
bed. Are you  
going to stop  
at the Seventh  
Book?"

In this mateer what sholde I longe tarye? —  
Lefth thi slombre and up thyn eyen dresse!  
The book I-maad of lyff[e] solitarie, 108  
Remembre theron, the which in sekirnesse  
Techeth the weie of vertuous besynesse,  
Bi and bi, who list reede eueri lyne,  
Of contemplacioun moral and dyuyne. 112

As I seide erst, yit lefft[e] up thi look,  
Forsak thi bed, rys up anon, for shame!  
Woldestow reste now on thyn seuent book,  
And leue the eihte? in sooth thou art to blame! 116  
Procede forth and gete thi-silf a name.  
And with o thyng do thi-silf conforte:  
As thou disseruest, men aftir shal reporte.

"Compare light  
to darkness,  
cowardice to  
high renown,  
virtuous in-  
dustry to sloth.

Maak a comparisou[n] tween dirknesse & liht, 120  
Tween Idilnesse and Occupacioun,  
Tween faire daies and the cloudi niht,  
Tween a coward prowesse and hih renoun,  
Tween vertuous spech and fals detraccioun; 124  
And to conclude, all vices to represse,  
Contrarye to slouthe is vertuous besynesse.

"Industry  
renews things  
of old antiquity  
and causes men  
to live after  
they are dead.  
All were gone  
had it not been  
for writers.

Vertuous besynesse, O Bochas, tak good heed,  
Renveth alle thynges off old antiquite, 128  
Maketh men to lyuen aftir thei be ded,  
Remembreth the noblesse of many gret cite;  
And ne wer writers, al wer goon, parde.  
Wherfor, Bochas, sith thou art nih the lond, 132  
Suffre nat thi ship to stumble on no sond.

103. to] for to H. 105. voide] use H, R 3. 108. bookis H.  
109. sekirnesse] siknesse H.  
115. on] at H. 116. eihte] eihte book R.  
119. shall aftir H.  
125. to] om. H. 126. is] & H.  
128. Renewith R, J, R 3, H 5.  
133. no] the R, J, P.

- I meene as thus: the shipp of thi *trauaille*,  
 Which hath passid the se of bookis seuene.  
 Cast nat anker til thou ha good ryuaille! 136  
 Lat no tempest of thundir, reyn nor leuene,  
 Nor no wyndis of the cloudi heuene,  
 Nor no fals ianglyng of demeres that wil blyue  
 Depraue thi labour, let thi shipp taryue. 140
- Haste on thi way, lat Grace crosse pi saille,  
 Fall on no sond of wilful necligence,  
 Lat good[e] will be cheef of thi counsaille,  
 To guye thi\* rother set enter dilligence; 144  
 Yif vitaille faille & wyn to thi dispense,  
 Yit at the laste, thynk, for thi socour  
 Sum roial prince shal quyte thi labour.
- Thynk, be writyng auctours did *per* payne 148  
 To yiue princis ther komendaciouns,  
 To Remus, Romulus callid foundours tweyne  
 Of Rome toun; & of too Scipiouns  
 Thei wrot the knihthod, prudence of too Catouns, 152  
 Of Iulius, Pompeye & Hanybal eek also,  
 Bexauple of whom looke that thou so do.
- Of prophetis thei wrot the prophecies  
 And the noblesse of olde Moises, 156  
 Of poetis the laureat poesies,  
 The force of Samson, the strengthe of Hercules;  
 Of two Grekis, Pirrus and Achilles,  
 Bi ther writyng — bookis sey the same — 160  
 Into this day endureth yit the name.
- And he that can and ceseth for to write  
 Notable exauples of our predecessours,  
 Of envie men wil hym atwite, 164  
 That he in gardyns leet *pershe* þe holsum flours  
 In sondry caas that myhte do gret socours.  
 Laboure for othir, & spare nat thi *trauaille*;  
 For vertuous labour geyn slouthe mai most auaille. 168

"The ship of your labour has passed the sea of seven books; do not cast anchor until you have come to port.

"Hasten on your way, let Grace set your sail and Good-will be chief of your counsel; and at the last, some royal prince will reward your labour.

"Writers have done their pain to commend princes

and to write the prophecies of prophets and the laureate poesy of poets.

"And he who can and does not write the notable deeds of our predecessors will be censured by men.

135. passid] *om.* H.

144. thi] the B, R, J. 145. expence H. 151. &] *om.* R.

152. the] *om.* R — & prudence H.

153. eek also] too H.

154. whom] them H. 162. and] *om.* R.

166. gret] *om.* H.

- "A fair portrait of a prince or person who is dead quickens the heart of his friend;
- A thyng remembrid of antique,  
Is whan ther is set a fair image [p. 365]  
Of a prince of hih or lough degre;  
Or of a persone a prent of his visage 172  
Gladeth his freend, quyketh his corage;  
And semblabli bexaumples may fynde  
Thynges forgetyn be writyng come to mynde.
- and in the same manner forgotten merits may be put in mind by writing. The end of our labour is devoted to Christ Jesu."
- And for to make our names perdurable, 176  
And our merites to putten in memorie,  
Vices teschewe, in vertu to be stable,  
That labour may of slouthe haue the victorie,  
To cleyme a see in the heuenli consistorie — 180  
Despiht of idilnesse & foorthryng of vertu —  
Fyn of our labour be youe to Crist Iesu."
- After Petrarch had done speaking, Bochas arose and sharpened his pen. Will had overcome the feebleness of age.
- ¶ Whan Petrark hadde rehersed this lessoun  
In rebukyng of vicious idilnesse, 184  
Bochas supprised and meued of resoun,  
Roos from his couche, gan his penne dresse.  
Will ouercam thymptotent feeblesse  
Of crokid age, that Bochas vndirtook 188  
For tacomplisshe up his eihte book.
- And I, John Lydgate, following after, unskilled and more than three score years old, youth and the bright colours of rhetoric faded:—
- I folwyng aftir, fordullid with rudnesse,  
Mor than thre score yeeris set my date,  
Lust of youthe passid [with] his freshnesse; 192  
Colours of rethorik to helpe me translate  
Wer fadid away: I was born in Lidgate,  
Wher Bachus licour doth ful scarsli fleete,  
My drie soule for to dewe & weete. 196
- I was born in Lydgate, where but little of Bacchus' liquor flows. Fordullid by age, I shall proceed in my labour.
- Thouh pallid age hath fordullid me,  
Tremblyng ioyntes let myn hand to write,  
And fro me take al the subtilite  
Of corious makyng in Inglissh to endite, — 200  
Yit in this labour treuli me taquite  
I shal proceede, as it is to me dewe,  
In thes too bookis Bochas for to sewe.

¶ **Explicit prologus libri Octaui.**

172. Or] of H — 2nd a] þe H. 174. semblaly R.  
175. cometh R. 190. with] for R.  
191. yeeris] of yeeres H. 192. with] om. R, J, P, H 5.  
196. to dewe] ta dew H.



## ¶ Incipit liber octauus.

[How the proude tiraunt Domytyan Emperour of Rome, and many other Emperours & nobles for ther outrages & wrecchidnesse mischeuesly ended.]<sup>1</sup>

**B**ROTHER to\* Titus, sone of Vespasian, [p.367] Domitian was an extortioner and pillager, who commanded men to call him god of all the world.  
 Cam next in ordre, as writ myn auctour, 205  
 The proude ambitious callid Domycian,  
 And was in Roome crownid emperour; —  
 An extorsioneer and a fals pillour, 208  
 Proudli comaundid, in his estat up stallid,  
 Of al the world he sholde a god be callid.

Thoruh hih presumpcioun, of hym it is eek told,  
 Nouthur of tymber koruen nor of ston, 212  
 Set up images of siluer and of gold,  
 In tokne ther was no god but he allon.  
 Into Pathmos he exiled eek Seynt Ihon,  
 And ageyn Cristene the seconde next Neroun, 216  
 That began first the persecucioun.

This same tiraunt, regnyng in his estat,  
 To alle the cite was passyng odious;  
 Best & most worthi he slouh of the Senat, 220  
 And onto all that wer[e] vertuous  
 Mortal enemy, and most malicious.  
 And for slauhtre of senatours in the toun  
 Axed the tryumphe, as maad is mencioniun. 224

Made among Iewes be ful gret outrage,  
 Wher-as he hadde grettest suspecioniun,  
 To slen all tho that wer of the lynage  
 Off Dauid kynreede or kyng Salamoun, 228  
 List he wer put out off domynacioun  
 Among[es] Iewes; this was his meenyng, —  
 Slouh all tho that wer born to be kyng.

204. to] of B — of] to H.

211. is] om. H.

221. onto] to H.

225. among] of H.

228. or] or of H, R 3, P, of J.

229. domynacioun] pecessioun H, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 150 verso.

and as God  
rightly wished  
to punish him,  
he was slain  
one night in  
his palace.  
Commodus,  
who succeeded,  
was given  
wholly to his  
fleshly appe-  
tites.

As was then  
the custom, he  
habitually  
went to theatre  
plays and  
also slew all  
the most virtu-  
ous senators.

During his  
time the public  
library was  
destroyed by  
lightning.  
Finally he was  
strangled by  
his concubine.

Helvius Pertinax, who came  
next on the ring,  
was old and  
unwieldy and  
soon slain.

Julian, a  
usurper, fol-  
lowed, and he  
was killed in  
battle by  
Severus, born  
of the line of  
Scipio Afri-  
canus.

Fired by malice,  
Severus after-  
wards perse-  
cuted the  
Christians,

Amyd his\* paleis, as God wolde of riht  
Punshe a tiraunt & quiten hym his meede, 232  
This Domycian was slayn vpon a niht,  
His kareyn aftir vnburied, as I reed.

¶ And Comodus doth aftir hym succede, 236  
Which was al youe be fleshli appetit  
To leue al vertu & folwe his fals delit.

Theatre pleyes of custum he did vse,  
As was the custum ther & the vsage; 240  
His liff in vices he falsli did abuse,

In lecherous lustis dispente al his young age,  
To the Romeyns did ful gret damage:  
For of the Senat that wer most vertuou, 244  
Wer falsli slay[e]n bi this Comodus.

In his tyme be strook of thundir dent  
And firy lihtnyng that cam down from heuene,  
The comoun librare was of the cite brent, 248

Witb roial bookis of al the craftis seuene,  
Bookis of poetis mo than I can neuene.  
And Comodus, breefli to termyne,  
Was slayn and stranglid bi his concubyne. 252

¶ Helmus Pertynax cam next on the ryng,  
Ordeyned aftir emperour of that toun,  
Old & vnweeldi, slayn in his gynnyng.  
Aftir whom, the book makth mencion, 256  
Be no title of successioun,

¶ But an intrusour, oon callid Iulian,  
Thestat vsurpyng to regne ther began. 260

But of the noble lynage Affrican,  
Born in Tripolis, a myhti gret cite,  
Oon Seuerus, that was a knihtli man,  
Gadred of Romeyns a wonder gret meyne. 264

Bothe maad strong, Iulian mette & he  
At Pount Melyn, a cite of Itaille,  
And ther was Iulyan slay[e]n in bataille.

¶ Seuerus aftir entrid the empire  
And took upon hym the domynacioun, 268  
Vpon Cristene, of malis sette affire,  
Began ageyn hem a persecucioun

232. his] the B, R, J. 238. fals] om. H. 247. fire R.  
253. Helmus] Elius P, Helinus R 3. 259. ther] thei R.  
262. knihtli] lykly R.

265. pount meleyen H, pount meleyn J, poyunt Mellian R, pont  
Miluian P.

Of tyrannye and fals ambicioun;

¶ But oon of Egypt callid Poscennys 272  
Ageyn Seuerus began to werke thus:

Gadred meyne Seuerus for tassaile, and was  
In purpos fulli, & theron dide his peyne, attacked by  
First with hym to haue a gret bataille, 276 Pescennius  
Next of thempire the crowne for tatteyne. Niger, whom,  
But ye shal heere what fill of thes tweyne: however, he  
On Poscennys fill the disconfiture, defeated.  
And Seuerus thempire doth recure. 280

In his purpos or he myht auaille, He also fought  
With oon Albynus, that was a manli kniht, in Gaul and  
He hadde [in] Gaule a ful gret bataille; defeated and  
Ful gret[e] blood shad in that mortal fiht, slew Albinus.  
Albynus slayn of verray force & myht, 284 He then went  
Seuervs aftir entrid in Breteyne, to Britain,  
Kauht[e] seeknesse & deide of the peyne. where he died  
of disease.

¶ Aftir Seuerus next cam Antonyne, [p. 368] 288 Antoninus  
Of whom the froward disposicioun, next ap-  
As alle auctours of hym determyne, — appeared —  
His besynesse and occupacioun a wicked man  
Set hool in flessfli delectacioun, whose whole  
So fals a lust his corage did assaille, — business and  
Among[es] Parthois slay[e]n in bataille. occupation was  
292 fleshly delight.

¶ Macrinvs aftir tofor Bochas cam down, He was slain  
Whilom a prefect in Roome the cite, 296 in battle by  
Of the Pretoire, and be invacioun the Parthians.  
Cam to the imperial famous dignite, Macrinus, who  
Occupied a yeer, sat in his roial see, succeeded An-  
Til Fortune list hym to disgrade, toninus,  
Among his knihtis slayn at Archelade. 300 reigned one  
year and  
was then killed  
by his soldiers.

¶ Next cam Aurelius surnamyd Antonyne, The emperor  
A gret ribaud & passyng lecherous, Antoninus  
Yit was he bisshop, as auctours determyne, 304 Aurelius was  
In the temple of Aliogobolus. a passing lecher-  
And in his tyme was oon Sabellius, ous ribald,  
A fals heretik, of whom\* gan the names although a  
Of a sect callid Sebellianes. 308 bisshop; and in  
his time the  
Sabellian sect  
arose.

272. Pescennius P. 273. to] þe H. 281. his] this H.

286. Briteyn H.

292. hool] holly R. 295. Macrinvs] Marcyus H, R 3.

304. he] the R. 305. Eliagabolus H, R 3, Heliogabalus H 5.

307. whon B.

- In his pride he used golden vessels for vulgar purposes, which was contrary to good breeding; and when his knights slew him, his body was thrown into a privy in despite.
- This said Aurelius, ageyn[e]s al norture,\*  
Of fals presumpcioun, in bookis it is told,  
Wolde nat pourge his womb bi nature,  
But in vessellis that wer maad of gold; 312  
And in despiht[e], whan that he wex old,  
Slayn off his knihtis, & nat aftir longe  
His careyn was throwen in a gonge.
- After Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius was elected emperor by the Senate. He defeated Xerxes, king of Persia, and when he sat in judgment,
- ¶ Aftir this proude forseid Antonyne, 316  
Into tempire be iust eleccioun  
Of senatours, as bookis determyne,  
Cam Aurelivs, & for his hih renoun  
Surnamyd Alisaundre, as maad is mencioniun. 320  
Fauht with Persiens lik a manli kniht,  
And ther kyng Xerses he put vnto þe fliht.
- Ulpian, who made three books of Digests, sat with him.
- This Aurelius, this prudent knihtli man,  
Whan he sat iuge in the consistorie, 324  
Ther sat oon with hym callid Vlpian,  
A gret cyuylien notable of memorie,  
Of whom it is to his ences of glorie  
Reported thus, be gret auctorite 328  
He of Digestis made bookis thre.
- Marcus Aurelius lost his life by accident in a fight among his soldiers.
- Ful pitousli this emperour lost his lyff,  
Casueli, as maad is mencioniun,  
Among his knihtes bi a sodeyn stryff, 332  
Wher he was slayn in that discencioun.  
Aftir whos eende, for short conclusioun,  
Tofor Bochas, the book weel telle can,  
Cam Maxymynus\* & with hym Gordian. 336
- Maximus, who was chosen emperor by his knights, was afterwards a bitter enemy of the Christians,
- ¶ Maxymynus\*, the cronicle doth expresse,  
Chose of his knihtis & his soudiours  
For his victorious marcial hih prowess  
Doon in Almaigne, & among emperours 340  
Set up in Roome, maugre the senatours.  
Aftir strong enmy, as myn auctour seith,  
With al his power onto Cristes feith.

309. norture] nature B, R, J.

312. gold] pure golde H.

325. Wlpian R. 329. He of] Off the R.

331. is made H.

336, 37. Maxymynus] Maxynymus B, J, Maximymus R, Maxymyns H, R 3.

343. With] Was R.

- He was [eek] enemy, his lyff who list to seen, 344 and especially  
 To cristen clerkis of gret auctorite, of old Origen;  
 And specialli to olde Origen. and at the  
 But in his moste furious cruelte, height of his  
 In Aquileia, a myhti strong contre, 348 cruelty he was  
 Of a prefect callid Puppian he was slayn; slain by a  
 Of whos deth [al] Cristen men wer fayn. prefect named  
 Puppian.
- ¶ Next bi the Senat chose was Gordian. Gordian made  
 First ageyn Parthois he cast hym to werreie; 352 war on the  
 Of Ianvs temple whan the werre gan Parthians and  
 He made the gatis been opnid with the keye, opened the  
 Which was a tokne, as olde bookis seye, — gates of the  
 Tho gatis opnyd, to folkis nih & ferre, 356 temple of  
 That with ther foon the Romeyns wolde haue werre. Janus.
- With Parthois first this saide Gordian Always vic-  
 To holde werre faste he gan hym speede; torious, he was  
 And upon hem alwey the feeld he wan. 360 finally slain at  
 Afftir he spedde hym into Perse & Meede, the Euphrates  
 Alwey victorious in bataille, as I reede; by treason.
- Vpon Eufrates slay[e]n, as I fynde, 364  
 Be fals tresoun, the cronicle maketh mynde.
- ¶ Next in ordre cam Phelipp be his name, Next in order  
 His sone eek Phelipp cam with hym also, came Philip  
 Myn auctour Bochas reherseth eek the same, and his son of  
 The fadir, the sone baptised bothe too, the same  
 Riht sad & wis in what thei hadde to doo, name. They  
 And wer the firste Cristene of echon 368 were the first  
 Emperours reknid; for ther toforn was non. Christian em-  
 perors.
- Be Poncius the martir, as I reede, [p. 369] 372 Pontius the  
 In Nicea, a famous gret cite, Martyr  
 Thei wer baptised, and aftir that in deede baptised them,  
 Slayn in bataille, for thei list nat flee. and both  
 Tofor ther deth, both of assent, parde, 376 were slain in  
 Ther tresours hool, that wer imperiall, battle because  
 To Cristis cherk, I fynde, thei gaff it all. they would not  
 flee. They gave  
 to the church,

344. eek] *om.* R, J.349. Purpien H. 350. al] *om.* R, J.357. foon] *sonne* R.

360. the feeld he] he this werre H.

364. tresoun] *resoun* R. 369. sad] witty H — what] that  
 J, P — to doo] a doo H.

- and Bishop  
Sixtus assigned  
St. Laurence to  
distribute it  
among the  
poor.  
St. Laurence  
was afterwards  
martyred by the  
tyrant  
Decius, who
- The bisshop Sixtus took pocessioun,  
Vertuousli assigned it to Laurence 380  
Therof\* to make distribucioun  
To poore folk in ther indigence;  
For which[e] deede be cruel violence  
The tiraunt Decius ageyn hym\* took a striff, 384  
Made hooli Laurence be bren[n]yng lese his lyf.
- also caused the  
two Philipps to  
be slain and by  
his falsehood  
and deceit  
became em-  
peror.
- This same Decius, cursid & cruell,  
Caused the slauhtre of thes Philippis tweyne; 388  
And for he was sotil, fals & fell,  
Be sleihte and falsheed he dide his besi peyne  
To thempire be force for to atteyne,  
The seunte tiraunt be persecucioun  
Which ageyn Cristene took first occasioun. 392
- During his  
time St. An-  
thony lived on  
fruit and roots  
in the desert.
- Myn auctour writ, tyme of this Decivs,  
The hooli hermyte, exaample of parfinesse,  
Be daies olde callid Antonivs, 396  
Lyued in desert ferr out in wildirnesse,  
As an hermyte despisyng al richesse, —  
Lyued be frut & rootis, as men tell,  
And of perfeccioun drank watir of þe well.
- In punishment  
of Decius'  
cursedness God  
sent a terrible  
pestilence to  
Italy.
- Vpon Decius for his cursidnesse, 400  
Ageyn Cristene which gaf so hard sentence,  
Thoruh Roome and Itaille, myn auctour berþ  
witnessse,  
In eueri cite was so gret pestilence,  
That be the sodeyn dedli violence, 404  
The hertis of men, dependyng in a traunce,  
To saue ther lyues coude no cheuisaunce.
- I will write no  
more about  
him.  
Gallus and  
Volusian  
reigned but  
two years each;
- Of this mateer write no mor I can;  
To this emperour I nil\* resorte ageyn. 408  
¶ Speke of Gallus and Volusian,  
That besi wern, ther labour was in veyn,  
Ther tyme but short, as summe bookis seyn;  
For Martyn writ, an old[e] cronicleer, 412  
In thempire thei regned but too yeer.

381. Therof] Ther for B — a destrubucioun H.

384. hym] hem, B, J, R.

385. brennyng] brotling P.

387. thes] þe H.

408. nil] wil B, R, J, H, R 3, H 5, P. 412. cronyculeer R.

413. too] oon R.

- Bothe wer slay[e]n bi the procuryng  
 And bi the purchace of oon Emylian,  
 A Romeyn kniht, [the] which be slih werkyng 416  
 To occupie thempire tho began.  
 Be tyrannye the lordshipe ther he wan,  
 Whos lordship, for lak of happ & grace,  
 No lenger laste than too monethes space. 420
- This litil chapitle, as tofor is seene,  
 Rehersid hath & toold in woordis pleyn  
 Of emperour[e]s almost ful fourteene; 424  
 And of alle wer good[e] non but tweyne.  
 Which to reherse I haue do my peyne,  
 And to proceede ferther, as I gan,  
 I mvt now write of oon Valerian.
- H**IS sone and he, callid Gallien, 428  
 To al Cristene bar gret enmyte,\*  
 Slouh all tho, ther legende men may seen,  
 That seruede Crist in trouthe & equite.  
 Whos persecucioun & hatful cruelte 432  
 Abatid was, as I can weel reherse,  
 Bi oon Sapor that was kyng of Perse.
- Bi force of armys Sapor, this myhti kyng,  
 Gan in Asia, & with his host cam down 436  
 Be Tigre, Eufrates, &, knihtli so ridyng  
 Toward the parties of Septemptrioun,  
 To Kaukasus nat ferr, fro Babiloun;  
 And al Surrye he proudli did assaille, 440  
 And Capadoce he wan eek be bataille.
- Whom for to meete cam down Valerian  
 To Mesopotayn with many legiouns.  
 The werre was strong; but this knihtli man, 444  
 This hardi Sapor, with his champiouns  
 The feeld hath wonne with al the regiouns  
 Affor rehersid; & thoruh Perse he ladde  
 Valerian bounde with che[y]nys round & sadde. 448
- He was be Sapor, maugre his visage,  
 This Valerian, so streihtli brouht to wrak,  
 Lik a prisoneer bounde to this seruage  
 Be obeissaunce, that founde wer no lak, 452

for both were slain at the instigation of a knight named Æmilian, who himself was emperor only two months.

This little chapter has told of fourteen emperors, of whom but two were good.

Valerian and his son Gallien were enemies of the Christians; but Valerian's cruelty was abated by Sapor, king of Persia,

who, riding north from the Tigris and Euphrates, attacked Syria and the Caucasus.

Valerian came down to meet him and was defeated and led to Persia in chains,

where he suffered the indignity of having to kneel down and let Sapor step on his back

416. the] *om.* R, J, P, R 3, H 5. 419. happ] *helpe* H.  
 420. moneth H. 429. ennyte B. 430. legendis H, R 3.  
 437. Tigre] *Tire* H. 439. To] *So* H. 447. Perse] *om.* R.  
 451. this] *his* H, R.

- To knele on foure & to profre his bak  
 Vnto Sapor whan hym list to ride,  
 Therbi to mounthe, for al his gret[e] pride.
- whenever he  
 wanted to  
 mount his  
 horse. This was thoffise of Valerian, [p. 370] 456  
 Be seruytute duryng many [a] yeer;  
 Wherf̄or he was callid of many man  
 Thassendyng stok into the sadil neer,  
 Which is in Frensh callid a mountweer. 460  
 This was his offis, to bowe down his corps  
 Whan that kyng Sapor sholde worpe upon his hors.
- This is For-  
 tune's way  
 with princes  
 and kings;  
 what happens  
 her wheel only  
 knows. This is the guerdoun & fauour of Fortune,  
 Hir olde maneer to princis & to kyngis, 464  
 Hir double custum vsid in comune  
 Be sodeyn chaung[e] of al worldli thynges.  
 Aftir tryumphes and ther uprisinges,  
 What folwith aftir, hir wheel [weel] telle can, 468  
 I take record of Valeryan:
- She shewed  
 herself fickle to  
 Valerian and  
 favourable to  
 Sapor. Yet he  
 was too cruelly  
 vengeable to  
 soil the back of  
 an emperour  
 with his feet! This ladi Fortune, þe blynde fell goddesse,  
 To Valerian shewed hirsilf vnstable,  
 Tauhte hym a lessoun of hir doubilnesse; 472  
 To kyng Sapor she was fauourable.  
 But yit he was to cruelli vengable,  
 With his feet, deuoid of al fauour,  
 To soille the bak of an emperour. 476
- Princes should  
 remember this  
 and be merciful  
 to their  
 prisoners. Of olde it hath be songe & cried loude, —  
 Record on Cirus & many othir mo, —  
 Kynges of Perse of custum ha[ue] be proude,  
 Aftir punshid an[d] chastised eek also. 480  
 Princis of merci sholde tak heed herto,  
 Aftir victorie in ther estat notable  
 To ther prisoneres for to be merciabile.
- Bochas, who  
 knows how to  
 rebuke tyrants,  
 says to Val-  
 erian. "Where  
 are your rubies  
 and sapphires  
 and rich pearls? Myn auctour Bochas in this mateer weel\* can 484  
 Rebuke tirauntes, that wer be daies olde;  
 Turneth his stile, speketh to Valerian:  
 "Wher be the rubies & sapphirs set in golde,  
 The riche perle & ryinges manyfolde 488

457. a] om. R, H, R 3. 458. many a H, J.

460. mountheer H, mountver R 3.

463. fauour &amp; guerdon R.

468. weel] om. R — here wele telle I can J.

478. on] of H, R 3. 481. herto] eek hereto R.

484. weel] weel tell B, R, J — only the n in can is written R.

485. wer] om. H. 487. the] thy H. 488. The] þi H.



That thou were wont [to] were upon thyn hondis?  
Now as a wrech art bounde in foreyn bondis.

Wher thou wer wont of furious cruelte,  
Clad in purple withynne Roome toun, 492  
To Crist contrayre in thyn imperial see,  
Yaff doom on martirs to suffre passioun,—  
Now listow bounde [&] fetrid in prisoun,  
To kyng Sapor constreyned to enclyne, 496  
Whan he list ride, bowe nek & chyne.

"You, who were clad in purple and gave judgment on the martyrs in Rome, can now bend your back to King Sapor when he wishes to ride.

Thus artow falle from thyn imperial stage!  
Think on Fortune and haue hir in memorie:  
She hath the cast in thraldam & seruage 500  
And eclipsed al thyn olde\* glorie.  
Wher thou sat whilom in the consistorie  
As an emperour & a myhti iuge,  
List bounde in cheynys and knowest no\* refuge. 504

"Thus you are fallen; think on Fortune, who has cast you into thralldom without remedy.

¶ It is ful ferr fall out of thi mynde  
The knihtli deede of worthi Publius,  
Of Roome a capteyn, ordeyned, as I fynde,  
To fihte ageyn[es] Aristomochus, 508  
Kyng of Asie; of fortune it fill thus:  
Whan the Romeyns dide the feeld forsake,  
This Publius among his foon was take.

"You have forgotten the example of worthy Publius, who, taken by his enemies in Asia,

This noble prince stondyng in dreedful caas, 512  
His lyf, his worshep dependyng atwen tweyne,  
In his hond holdyng a sturdi maas,  
Smet out oon of his eyen tweyne  
Of hym that ladde hym; the tothir for þe peyne 516  
That he felte and the gret[e] smerte  
Took a dagger, rooff Publius to the herte.

and, preferring death to servitude, smote out an eye of the soldier who led him, and he, mad with pain, struck Publius to the heart with a dagger.

Which loued more his worshep than his lyff,  
Ches rather deie than lyuen in seruage; 520  
This conceit hadde in his imagynatyff,  
And considred, sith he was in age,  
To saue his honour it was moor auantage  
So to be slayn, his worshep to conserue, 524  
Than lich a beeste in prisoun for to sterue.

"Publius loved his honour more than his life and did not care to die like an animal in captivity.

489. to] om. H, R, R 3, H 5.

494. Yaff] yeve H — martirs] mateers R. 501. olde] eld B.

504. no] non B. 508. Aristomachus R, H, Arstonichus P.

515. his] the P.

"As Valerius says, rather than languish in prison a man had better choose to starve to death.

Fortunis chapitle of hym ne\* was nat rad;  
Of which Valerius maketh mencion,  
Aftir whos conceit, no man in vertu sad 528  
Sholde nat longe langwisch in prisoun,  
But rather cheese, lik his oppynyoun,  
Of manli force & knihtli excellence  
The deth endure of long abstynence, 532

as Agrippina did, so that she lay pale and prostrate, in spite of Tiberius, and thus ended.

¶ As whilom dide the princesse Aggripyne,  
Whan she in prisoun lay fetrid and Ibounde;  
Of hir fre chois she felte so gret pyne 536  
Of hungir, thrust, in stori it is founde,  
That she lay pale & gruff upon the grounde,  
Maugre Tiberye, & leet hir gost so weende  
Out of hir bodi; this was hir fatal eende.

"But as for you, Valerian, who with cruel heart made many a Christian die, no such thought ever entered your mind.

Thou stood ferr of of al such fantasie, [p. 371] 540  
I speke to the, o thou Valeryan!  
Thi cruel herte of fals malencolie  
Made whilom deie many Cristen man;  
And [many] martir, sith Cristis feith began, 544  
Which for mankynde starff upon the rood, —  
Thei for taquite hym list to sheede her blood.

"You were friendly enough to the Egyptians and their Isis,

Ageyn his lawe thou wer impacient  
And importune be persecucioun; 548  
Thou dist faouere & suffre in thyn entent  
That Egipcienst dide ther oblacioun,  
Ther sacrefises & rihtes up-so-doun  
Vnto Isis, of froward wilfulnesse, 552  
That was of Egipt callid cheef goddesse.

and to the Jews and Chaldeans and Cretans; but you killed the Christians and died yourself in prison like a wretch."

Fauourable thou wer in thi desir  
To suffre Iewes ther Sabat to obserue,  
And Caldeis to worshepe[n] the fyr, 556  
And folk of Crete Saturn for to serue.  
And Cristene men thou madist falsli sterue,  
Of whos lawe for thou dist nat rechche,  
Thou dei[d]est in prisoun at myscheef lik\* a wrech-  
che." 560

526. ne] it B, R, J, P.

538. gost] breth H. 529. 1st hir] be H.

542. of] and R, H, R 3, H 5. 546. to] forto R.

547. his] this H — impacient R. 549. & suffre] suffrid H.

556. to] for to H, R 3.

560. deidest] diest R, deyest H 5, died J, P — lik] as B, R, R 3,  
H 5.

[How Gallien sone of valerian was slayn]<sup>1</sup>

**N**EXT in ordre to Bochas tho cam doun  
 Sone of Valerian, oon callid Gallien.  
 But for the grete horrible effusioun  
 Of Cristen blood[e], that men myhte seen  
 Shadde be Valerian, God wolde it sholde been  
 Shewed openli to Romeyns be vengauce  
 Of many a contre sodeyn disobeissaunce.

564 The reign of Gallienus was disturbed by rebellions, in punishment for the effusion of Christian blood shed by his father Valerian.

Thei of Almeyne the Alpies dide passe  
 Vnto Rauenne, a cite of Itaille;  
 Gothis also, proud of cheer & face,  
 Hadde ageyn Grekis many gret bataille;  
 And thei of Hungry, armyd in plate & maille,  
 With them of Denmark, furious & cruell,  
 Ageyn Romeyns wex of assent rebell.

568 The Germans came to Ravenna, and the Goths and Danes revolted.

To whos damage in this mene while  
 Among Romeyns it is befalle thus:  
 Woful werris which called been civile  
 Gan in the cite, cruel and despitous.  
 First whan thei mette was slay[e]n Gemyvs,  
 Which first took on hym, in bookis as I reede,  
 Of hih corage to were purpil weede.

572 In Rome there were cruel civil wars;

Oon Postumyvvs, a myhti strong Romeyn,  
 Kept al Gaule vndir subieccioun;  
 To ther auail vnwarli aftir slayn  
 Among his knihtes, for al his hih renoun,  
 Be a sodeyn vnkouth discencioun.  
 Next Victoryn, hauyng the gouernaunce  
 Of al Gaule, was aftir slayn in Fraunce.

576 and Posthumus, who defeated the Franks in Gaul, was slain by his knights. Victorian was slain in France,

But Gallien, of whom I spak toforn,  
 Sone and heir to Valerian,  
 His domynacioun off purpos he hath lorn,  
 In *Republica* [anoon] whan he began,  
 Lich a contrarious & a froward man  
 Wex lecherous and vicious of lyuyng,  
 At myscheff slay[e]n; this was his eendyng.

584 and Gallien, who lost his authority by evil living, died at mischief.

564. myhte] may H.

576. it is befalle] it befill H. 577. The wofull H.

585. hih] gret H, R. 592. anoon] om. R, J, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

[How Quynlyus was moordred by women.]<sup>1</sup>

Quintilius,  
brother of  
Claudius, was  
murdered by  
women. I do  
not know why.

¶ Next Gallien cam oon Quyntilius, 596  
A man remembred of gret attemp[e]raunce,  
Brother of berth[e] to gret[e] Claudius,  
Wis & discreet in all his gouernaunce.  
Who may of Fortune eschewe the [sodeyn] chaunce?—  
To write his eende shortly in a clause, 601  
Of women moordred; I cannat seyn the cause.

[Off Aurelian in Denmark born.]<sup>2</sup>

Aurelian, born  
in Denmark,  
began a great  
war against  
the Goths.  
His labour was  
for the profit  
of Rome.

¶ Of Denmark born next cam Aurelian, 604  
A worthi kniht his enmyes for tassaille.  
Ageyn Gothes a gret werre he began,  
Gat victorie in many strong bataile,  
Whos noble conquest gretli did auaille  
To comoun proffit; for al his werk, parde, 608  
Was to thencres of Roome the cite.

He recovered  
all the North  
and asked for  
the triumph;  
but one thing,  
his enmity to  
Christ, eclipsed  
his glory.

He recurid al Septemprion,  
And westward had many gret victorie.\*  
Among othir, I fynde [that] he was oon 612  
Axed the tryumphe to be put in memorie.  
But ther was o thing\* eclipsed al his glorie,  
Which hath the liht of his knihthod *witbdrawe*,  
For he was enmy to Crist & to his lawe. 616

Tacitus and  
Florianus  
followed. I  
can find nothing  
noteworthy  
about either of  
them.

Of whom Bochas list no mor now write,  
But in his book goth foorth as he began,  
¶ Of oon remembryng þat callid was Tacite, 620  
Which was successour to Aurelyan;  
¶ And aftir hym succeded Floryan,  
Of which[e] tweyne no remembraunce I fynde  
That is notable to be put in mynde.

[How Probus disconfited Romayns and aftir was slayn.]<sup>3</sup>

Probus reigned  
more than  
seven years.  
He defeated  
Saturninus

Probus aftir regned ful seuene yeer [p. 372] 624  
And foure moneth, which thoruh his hih renoun  
Geyn Saturnynvs, with a [ful] knihtli cheer,

611. victorite B.

612. & among H, And among R 3 — that] *om.* R, J, H 5.

614. o thing] athing B. 619. was callid H.

626. Saturnynus] Seatourns H, senatours R 3 — ful] *om.* J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 152 verso.      <sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

<sup>3</sup> MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

And brouht hym proudli to subieccioun;  
 Natwithstondyng that he in Roome toun 628  
 Took upon hym of wilful tirannye  
 Hooli thempire he for to reule & guie.

Beside the cite callid Agripyne and slew  
 Proculus and  
 Bonosus in  
 battle.  
 This seid[e] Probus geyn many proud Romeyn 632  
 A bataille hadde, list[e] nat declyne,  
 Mette Proculus, a myhti strong capteyn,  
 With oon Bonosus; & bothe ther wer slayn,  
 And al ther meyne of verray force & myht 636  
 Slayn in the feeld; the remnaunt put to fliht.

Aftir this bataille & this disconfiture Finally he was  
 himself slain in  
 a tower at  
 Sirmium; let  
 no man trust  
 Fortune.  
 Probus was loggid in Smyrme, a gret cite,  
 And ther vnwarli of sodeyn auenture 640  
 Slayn in a tour that callid was Ferre.  
 But a smal sesoun last his prosperite:  
 Swich is Fortune; lat no man in hir truste;  
 Al wordli thynges she chaungeth as she liste! 644

[How Clarus and his ij. sones were myscheuyd.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Tofor Bochas Clarus next cam down Clarus and his  
 two sons,  
 Numerian and  
 Carinus, next  
 came before  
 Bochas. Born  
 of a noble  
 line in Nar-  
 bonne, he took  
 Seleucia and  
 Ctesiphon,  
 With his too sonys, Numerian & Caryne.  
 And, as I fynde, he was born in Narbon 648  
 And descendid of a noble lyne.  
 But whan that he most cleerli dide shyne  
 In his empire, he gat cites tweyne,  
 Chose & Thelifount, in Partois with gret peyne.

Beside Tigre, a famous swift ryueer, 652 but was killed  
 by lightning at  
 the Tigris, and  
 Numerian was  
 blinded.  
 He pihte his tentis, & cast hym þer tabide.  
 A sodeyn lihtnyng his face cam so neer,  
 Smet al to pouder, for al his gret[e] pride;  
 And Numerian that stood be his side 656  
 Hadde a mark[e] that was sent from heuene:  
 Loste bothe his eyen with the fyry leu[en]e.

639. Smyrne J, Smyryn R 3, Sirmine P — a gret] þe H.

643. Swich is Fortune] om. H — hir] hir curtesye H.

644. as she liste] at hir lust H, as hir list R 3.

645. Carus P. 647. Nabourne H.

651. Choce H — Tholifaunt H, Ctesiphon P — Parroys J.

652. Tibre H.

658. with the] eke with H, R 3, P — fire R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

Carinus ruled unjustly in Dalmatia and was cast down for his vicious life.

His othir sone Carynus, a good kniht,  
 In Dalmacia hadde al the gouernaunce; 660  
 But\* for that he gouerned nat ariht,  
 He was cast doun & lost al his puissaunce:  
 Vicious lyff kometh alwey to myschaunce.  
 Sepcius chose Dalmacia for to guye, 664  
 Among his knihtis moordrid of envie.

[How the hardy quene Zenobia fau3t with Aurelian  
 and was take.]<sup>1</sup>

My author now turns to Zenobia; but as Chaucer has already told her story, I will rehearse only its outlines.

He describes her life in his Book of Canterbury Tales.

She was born of the stock of worthy Ptolemy

and married Odenathus, King of Palmyra,

**M**YN auctour heer no lenger list s[ol]iourne  
 Of these emperours the fallis for to write, 668  
 But in al haste he doth his stile tourne  
 To Zenobia hir stori for to endite.  
 But for Chauceer dide hym so weel aquite  
 In his tragedies hir pitous fall tentrete,  
 I will passe ouer, rehersyng but the grete. 672

In his book of Cauntirbury Talis  
 This souereyn poete of Brutis Albioun,  
 Thoruh pilgrymys told be hillis & be valis,  
 Wher of Zenobia is maad mencion, 676  
 Of hir noblesse and of hir hih renoun,  
 In a tragedie compendiousli told all,  
 Hir marcial prowesse & hir pitous fall.

Myn auctour first affermeth how that she 680  
 Descendid was, to telle of hir lynage,  
 Born of the stok of worthi Tholome  
 Kyng of Egipt, ful notable in that age.  
 And this Zenobia, expert in al langage, 684  
 Wis of counsail & of gret prouidence,  
 Passed al othir in fame of elloquence.

Among she was armyd in plate & maille,  
 Of Palmerencys\* weddid to the kyng 688  
 Callid Odenatus, prudent in bataille  
 She was also, be record of writyng,  
 Hardi, strong, hir lordship defendyng,

661. But] And B, J, P.

667. for] om. H. 669. hir] his R, J.

670. so wele did hym quyte H, R 3. 679. prowessis H.

688. Palmerenoys B, Palmerencys J, Palmyrences P, Palmy-  
 nerois R, H.

- Maugre all tho, with hir cheualrie, 692  
 Ageyn[e]s hire that wrongli took partie.
- Be Odenatus she hadde sonis tweyne, by whom she  
 Heremanvs callid was the ton, had two sons.  
 And Thymolaus, of beute souereyne. 696 After they  
 Aftir whos berth the ther fadir gan anon were born  
 To occupie the prouynces euerichon their father  
 Of Perse and Mede; bi processe made hem flee, occupied  
 Of Zenobia, the hardi wise queen. 700 Persia and  
 Media,
- Whil Odenatus wex most glorious and soon after-  
 In his conquest thoruhout Perse & Meede, wards was  
 Slayn he was be oon Meonyus, slain by his  
 Which to the kyng was cosyn, as I reede; 704 cousin  
 But for because of this horrible deede Maconius,  
 And for the moordre of kyng Odenate, who was  
 Deide at myscheff & passed into fate. executed for  
 his crime.
- Be processe aftir, Zenobia the queen [p. 373] 708 Zenobia  
 Took hir too sonis and proudli did hem leede dressed  
 Tofor hir chaar[e], that men myhte hem seen, her sons in  
 How thei wer born as princis to succede. purple and  
 Made hem lik kynges be clad in purpil weede; 712 shewed them  
 Them to diffende this myhti creature, to the people  
 Hardi as leoun, took on hir hir armure. as their future  
 princes,
- For al hir lordis & knihtis she hath sent, and in defiance  
 Maugre the Romeyns proudli gan hir speede, 716 of the Romans  
 Al the parties of the orient\* continued her  
 To occupie & hir host to leede. husband's  
 Of themperour she stood nothing in dreede, conquests in  
 Callid Aurelian, mette hym in bataille, 720 the East,
- With hir meyne hym proudli did assaille.
- On outhere side that day gret blood was shad; but was de-  
 The strook of Fortune withstant no creature: feated in battle  
 The queen Zenobia was taken & forth lad; 724 and taken  
 Fauht first as longe as she myht endure; prisoner by  
 With riche stonis frett was hir armvre, Aurelian  
 With whom themperour, so entryng Roome toun,  
 Of tryumphe requeryng the guerdoun. 728
- He dempte it was couenable & sitting, 728  
 This emperour, this proude Aurelian,

695. Herennian P. 696. Timolaus P. 707. &] om. H.  
 709. hir] his R. 715. al] om. R. 717. thorient B.

- and led in his triumph. Taxe the tryumphe; it was so gret a thyng  
To take Zenobia [that] such a werre gan 732  
Ageyn\* Romeyns, this marcial woman.  
For I suppose of no woman born  
Was neuer queen so hardi seyn afforn.
- She was brought to Rome in golden fetters, plunged down from her high estate into poverty. This hardi princesse, for al hir roialte,\* 736  
Whos hih renoun thoruh al the world was knowe,  
With stokkis of gold was brouht to the cite,  
From hih estat in pouert plongid lowe.  
A wynde contrarye of Fortune hath so blowe, 740  
That she, alas, hath pitousli made fall  
Hir that in prowesse passed women all.
- Diocletian, who next appeared, was a gardener in his youth. **T**HE triumphe youe [un]to Aurelian  
For þe conquest he hadde upon þis queen 744  
Callid Zenobia, cam Dioclesian,\*  
Born in Dalmacia, his stori who list seen.  
Out of his contre first he dide fleen,  
Of garlec lekis, as seith the cronycleer, 748  
Because that he was but a gardener.
- Later on he became a soldier and was chosen emperor. Other mencion is non of his lynage.  
Of his berth the forsook the regioun,  
Lefft his craf[t] of deluyng and cortilage, 752  
Gaff hym to armys, & be eleccioun  
Chose to been emperour & regne in Roome toun.  
First into Gaule he sente a gret poweer,  
And Maxymyan he made ther his vikeer. 756
- He made Maximian his general in Gaul, but the people were rebellious until chastised by Carausius, His viker ther hadde many gret bataille  
Vpon swich people that be rebellioun  
Gan frowardli contrarye & assaille  
Tobeye his lordship withynne that regioun, 760  
Til Caransynus be commysсион,  
An hardi kniht vndir Maxymyan,  
Them to chastise took on hym lik a man.
- who did great damage there to the common weal by robbing the country. But be processe, the stori doth deuise, 764  
His lordship ther dide gret damage  
To comoun proffit; for he be couetise

732. that] *om.* R.

735. befor R.

739. ploungyng R.

745. Deoclesian B.

755. into] in H.

761. Carasius P.

733. Ageyn] Geyn B, R, J.

736. roialte] cruelte B, J.

742. that] state R.

748. cronyculeer R.

760. that] *om.* H, R 3.

766. To] To the R.



The contre robbed be ful gret outrage,  
 And to hymself he took al the pillage, 768  
 And of presumpcioun wered the colour  
 Of riche purpil lik an emperour.

This Karansynvs of Breteynys tweyne,  
 Proudli vsurped to be ther gouernour, 772  
 Lik a rebel geyn Roome dide his peyne  
 And besied hym be marcial labour,  
 With many a straunge foreyn soudiour;  
 Hauyng no title nor commysсион,  
 Contynued longe in his rebellioun. 776

Wherof astonyd was Dioclesian;  
 Seyng this myscheef dreedful & pereilous,  
 Ordeyned in haste that Maxymyan 780  
 Was surnamyd & callid Herculus;  
 Made hym emperour, namyd [hym] Augustus,  
 Which hadde afforn[e] no mor gouernaunce  
 But of Gaule, which now is callid France. 784

Also mor-ouer this Dioclesian  
 Made in this while gouernour[e]s tweyne,  
 Constancius & oon Maxymyan  
 Surnamyd Galerius. Constancius in certeyne, 788  
 In this while to wedde dide his peyne  
 Douhtir of Maxymyan callid Herculus,  
 Named Theodora, myn auctour writeth thus.

Be Theodora this Constancius [p. 374] 792  
 Hadde sexe childre in trewe mariage,  
 Brethre to Constantyn, the story\* tellith þus,  
 Which aftirward, whan he cam to age,  
 For his manhod and marcial corage, 796  
 Was chose & maad[e] lord & gouernour  
 Of al the world, and crownid emperour.

Caransynvs, which hadde ful seuene yeer,  
 Lich as I tolde, rebellid in Breteyne 800  
 Ageyn the Romeyns, a gret extorsioneer, —

He usurped the title of governor and rebelled against Rome,

whereupon Diocletian invested Maximian with the titles Augustus and Herculus and made him co-emperor.

He also appointed Constantius and Galerius governors; and Constantius married Maximian's daughter Theodora,

by whom he had six children, brothers of Constantine, who afterwards became the great emperor.

768, 69 are transposed H. 773. ageyn H.  
 776. nor] non R.  
 779] Made in this while gouernours tweyne R.  
 780] Constancius and oon Maxymyan R.  
 782. namyd] callid H — hym] om. R, J, H 5, P.  
 784. of] al H. 785. R omits this stanza.  
 794. story] cronicle B, R, J, P — the cronycler seith thus R 3.  
 799. Carasynus H, R 3, Caramsynus J, Carasius P.

- Carausius was murdered by Alectus, who occupied his place three years, 804
- until slain by Asclepiodatus, who in turn brought all Britain again to subjection. 808
- Constantius fought the rebellious Italians and after an early defeat was successful. 812
- Diocletian took Alexandria and allowed his soldiers to pillage the city. 820
- He then began to persecute the Christians in Italy, and was helped by Maximian, by whose sword many a martyr was slain: 824
- the Theban Legion at Octoduram, St. Alban and Pope Marcellus. Churches were burnt and cities lost their franchises. 828
- 832
- 836

A kniht Alletus that dede at hym disdeyne  
Moordrid hym, & aftir ded his peyne  
Be force onli and extort tirannye  
Fulli thre yeer his place to occupie.

Til Asclepio was sent fro Roome doun,  
Slouh this Alletus, maugre al his myht,  
Brouht al Breteyne to subieccioun  
Of the Romeyns, lik as it was riht.  
And in this while, lik a manli kniht—  
For Italliens gan Romeyns disobeye —  
Constancius gan proudli hem werreie.

He firste with hem had a strong bataille,  
His meyne slayn & he put to the fliht.  
Trustyng on Fortune, he gan hem eft assaille,  
And sexti thousand wer slay[e]n in þat fihht;  
The feeld was his thoruh Fortunis myht,  
As she that koude dissymule for a while,  
And aftirward falsli hym begile.

I will passe ouer as breeffi as I can,  
Set aside al foreyn incidentis,  
Resorte ageyn to Dioclesian,  
Which at Alisaundre proudli pihte his tentes,  
The capteyn slouh, gaff in comaundementes  
To his knihtis to do ther auantage  
Witbynne the cite be robberyng & pillage.

Gan ageyn Cristene gret persecucioun,  
Vsed his tirannye in the orient;\*  
Bi his bidding Maxymyan cam doun  
Toward the parties of the occident.  
Bothe these tirauntis wrouhte be assent,  
Vndir whos swerd many [a] martire deies,  
Slayn in Octodorun the legeoun of Thebeies.

At Verolamye, a famous old cite,  
Seynt Albon slayn; his legende doth so telle.  
And in Roome be furious cruelte  
The pope slayn, which callid was Marcelle.  
Be ther statutis & be ther doomys felle

802. Alectus P. 814. the] om. R. 818. As] And R.

823. at] that R. 828. thorient B. 832. a] om. B, R, J.

833. in] at H — Octodorn H, R — legeoun] region P, Religion R.

835. Albon] abbon R — his] þe H.

- Cherchēs wer brent, & tounes\* & citees  
 Loste ther franchise & al ther libertees. 840
- Froward enmy he was to Cristis lawe,  
 Made many a martir deie for his sake,  
 Wex feeble & old & gan hym [to] withdrawe  
 From occupacioun, his reste for to take; 844  
 His atturne Maxymyan he doth make.  
 In his laste age, it is rehersid thus,  
 Stood in gret dreed[e] of Constancivs,—
- The dreed[e] of hym sat so nih his herte,— 848  
 And therupon took swich a fantasie,  
 Imagynyng he myht[e] nat asterte,  
 Be fraude of hym but that he sholde deie.  
 Almost for feer fill in a frenesie, 852  
 And of swich dreed, the book makth mencion,  
 He slouh hymself be drynkyng of poison.
- ¶ As I told erst, in the occident  
 Maxymyan, callid Herculus, 856  
 Regned as emperour; & euere in his entent  
 To pursue martirs he did ay his labours.  
 Of whos berthe Bochas fond non auctours;  
 This to seyne, he coude neuer reede 860  
 Wher he was bor[e]n, nor of what kynreede.
- He fynt no mor of this Maxymyan,  
 Of his uprisyng in especiall,  
 But that he was bi Dioclesian 864  
 Set in dignite callid imperial,  
 Famous in armys, prudent & marciall,  
 Daunted all tho that dide ageyn hym stryue,  
 Slouh Geneyans callid, in noubre fyue. 868
- Rood in Affrik lik a conquerour,  
 Brouht to subieccioun thre sturdi naciouns —  
 Fortune that tyme did hym such fauour —  
 Gat Sarmatois with othir regiouns, 872  
 Many cites & many riche touns  
 Bi his conquest of newe that he hath wonne;  
 Thoruh the world his name shon lik a sunne.

When Diocletian grew old and feeble he abdicated in favour of Maximian.

During his last days he stood in such dread of Constantius that he fell into a frenzy and slew himself by poison.

Maximian reigned in the west and continued to martyr Christians;

and Bochas knows no more about him than that he was a great soldier and that Diocletian made him emperor.

He conquered Africa, Sarmatia, and many other regions, and his name shone throughout the world like a sun.

839. & tounes] in touns B, R, in townes J.

841. he was] *om.* R. 843. to] *om.* R, H 5, P.

851. but] *om.* H. 852. a] *om.* R. 858. labour H.

859. auctour H.

868. Genciauns H, gencians R 3, Genciens H 5, Giauntes P.

872. Sarmacia P. 873. cite H.

Yet Diocletian  
advised him to  
resign his  
dignity.

He was cherished in armys from his youthe, [p. 375] 876  
Dide gret emprises for\* Roome the cite;  
Yit Dioclesian, as it is weel kouthe,  
Counsailed hym resigne his dignite.  
But he was loth to forsake his see, 880  
Sith he was lord & gouerned all,  
For to renounce his stat imperiall.

and finally he  
did; but after-  
wards repent-  
ing sought to  
recover his  
throne.

But be assent of Dioclesian,  
As he hymself had left al gouernaunce, 884  
So euene lik this Maxymyan  
Dischargid hymself of his roial puissaunce.  
But aftirward he fill in repentaunce  
And besi was, as dyuers bookis seyn, 888  
Thestat of emperour to recure ageyn,

In this he was  
opposed by Ga-  
lerius, for his  
son Maxentius  
had already  
been declared  
emperor.

Which for to acheue he dede his dilligence.  
He was distourbid be Galerius,  
For his sone, that callid was Maxence, 892  
Put in pecessioun, myn auctour writeth þus;  
To which[e] thyng he gan wex envious  
And gan ordeyne menys in his thouht  
To trouble hym; but it auailed nouht. 896

and when he  
found that he  
could not suc-  
ceed in his de-  
sign, and his  
daughter Fausta  
had betrayed his  
intentions, he  
fled to Gaul  
and was finally  
slain by Con-  
stantius at  
Marseilles.

Whan his purpos myhte take non auail  
Ageyn Maxence, as Bochas doth descryue,  
His douhtir Fausta, þat knew al his counsail,  
Discurid his purpos; for which he fled[de] blyue 900  
Into Gaule & durste no lenger stryue;  
And bi Co[n]stancius in Marcile the cite  
Slayn sodeynli, lost al his dignite.

[How Galeryus oppressid martirs & cristys feith  
and mischeuesly ended.]<sup>1</sup>

Next came  
Galerius, a  
froward vicious  
man of evil  
disposition.  
We do not  
know his  
descent, yet he  
was set high  
on the stage of  
worldly dig-  
nity.

**N**EXT tofor Bochas cam Galerivs, 904  
A man disposid to riot & outrage,  
Euele entechchid, froward, vicious.  
Ther is no stori speketh of his lynage,  
Yit was he set ful hih upon the stage 908  
Of worldli dignite, roos up to hih estat;  
Yit in his gyn[n]yng he was nat fortunat.

877. for] forn B. 897. his] this R. 898. doth] did R.

899. al] om. H. 900. purpos] consail R.

905. dispoised R.

906. tecchid J, teched P — froward] frowas R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 154 recto.

- He was sent out bi Dioclisian,  
 And maad *emperour* bi his auctorite,  
 Ageyn Narseus, the proude knihtli man,  
 Regnyng in Perse & lord of that contre,  
 Which heeld[e] werre with Roome the cite, —  
 For which Galerius took on hym this emprise, 912  
 With mihti hand his pride to chastise. 916
- Galerius entred into Perse-lond;  
 Kyng Narseus mette hym of auenture;  
 Hadde a strong bataille, faucht per hond of\* hond; 920  
 On Galerius fill the discomfiture,  
 His fortune suich he myht[e] nat endure.  
 Clad in purple, as maad is mencionn,  
 Of Dioclisian resceyued this guerdoun: 924
- At ther meetyng, anon or he was war,  
 Dioclisian made hym for tabide,  
 To his confusioun, sittyng in his chaar,  
 To walke on foote be the charis side. 928  
 With many rebuk abatid was his pride,  
 That Galerius for the gret[e] shame  
 Gan seeke a mene ageyn to gete his name.
- Gan for tasseble his olde soudiours, 932  
 Made his ordenaunce be dilligent werking,  
 Ches out the beste preeuid werreyours;  
 With a gret host to Perse he cam ridyng  
 And eftt ageyn faucht ther with the kyng, 936  
 That the Persiens, maugre al ther myht,  
 Wer be Galerius that day put to fliht.
- The feeld was his, gat ther gret richesse,  
 Robbed ther tentis, wan ther gret pillage. 940  
 In his resort resceyued in sothnesse  
 With\* gret noblesse, because of that viage —  
 Thus can Fortune chaungen hir visage! —  
 Of Dioclisian, wher he stood in disdeyn, 944  
 With newe triumphe resortid is ageyn.
- This cloudi queen stant euer in noun certeyn,  
 Whos double wheel quauereth euer in doute,  
 Of whos fauour no man hath be certeyn: 948

Diocletian  
 made him em-  
 peror and sent  
 him out  
 against Narses,  
 king of Persia.

who defeated  
 him.

When he next  
 met Diocletian  
 Diocletian re-  
 buked him,  
 and sitting in  
 his chariot  
 compelled him  
 to walk on  
 foot alongside,  
 the shame of  
 which impelled

him to set out  
 again to Persia  
 to recover his  
 reputation. He  
 fought Narses  
 a second time,  
 and defeating  
 him won great  
 plunder.

Thus Fortune  
 can change her  
 moods. She  
 stands in un-  
 certainty,

914. &] *om.* R. 920. of] for B, R, J, to P.  
 923. purpull H. 924. this] his R. 927. chaire H.  
 935. a gret] agre R — he] *om.* H, R 3.  
 942. With] In B, R, J, P, H 5. 947. wheel] quele H.

her wheel  
poised ever  
ready to turn.

Ther\* oon hath grace, ano<sup>per</sup> is put oute.  
Lat eueryman as it cometh aboute  
Take his tourn & neuere in hir assure;  
Faillng in armys is but an auenture!

952

Afterwards Ga-  
lerius governed  
Africa and  
Italy, but in  
his old age he  
persecuted  
Christ's faith.

Thus Galerius aftir his bataill  
On Persiens gan wexen glorious,  
Gouernid Affrik & lordshipp of Itaille,  
Thoruh al\* thorient wex victorious,  
Til he for age gan wexen tedious,  
His laste daies maligned, as men seith,  
Of fals hatreede ageyn[es] Cristis feith.

956

He set two  
vicars, Severus  
and Maxentius,  
in his empire  
to help him  
put down the  
law of Christ,

And hym to helpen in thes fals mateeris, [p. 376] 960  
It is remembrid to his confusioun,  
In his empire he sette too vikeris,  
The lawe of Crist toppresse & put down.\*  
Gaff hem power in euery regioun  
To punshe martirs & putte hem to þe dep;  
And in this while ful many on he sleth.

964

Bi this saide cruel Galerivs,  
Which of thempire had al the gouernaunce,  
Of cursid herte & corage despitous,  
Be his vsurpid imperial puissaunce  
Gaf auctorite for to do vengauce  
Vnto tweyne, Seuerus & Maxence,  
On al Cristen bi mortal violence.

968

972

and chose  
Maxentius em-  
peror, who  
subsequently  
quarrelled with  
Severus.  
Severus died of  
the plague at  
Ravenna.

A certeyn space, bothe of oon accord,  
Thestat of emperour chose was Maxence,  
Til Seuerus & he fill at discord.  
Anon aftir bi vengable pestilence,  
Withynne a cite of notable premynce  
Callid Rauenne, Seuerus ther was slayn,  
Of which Galerius, God wot, was nothyng fayn.

976

980

Galerius next  
chose Licinius,  
a Danish  
knight, to be  
emperor in  
opposition to  
Maxentius,

For which in haste this Galerivs,  
Hym to supporte & stonde in his defense,  
Ches out of Denmark a kniht Licinius  
To been emperour, thoruh knihtli excellence  
For to withstonde & fihte ageyn Maxence.

984

949. Ther] Thei B, Thouh J, though P — is] may be H.  
952. an] om. R.  
956. al] at B.  
963, 64 are transposed in B, J.  
965. punysh H.  
979. Rauenna R.

But Maxence, of Romeyn knihtis all,  
Was chose emperour & set up in his stall.

With which eleccioun Gallerius wex wood,  
Fill in a maner froward frenesie,  
His entrailles brent[e], corrupt wex his blood,  
And of his froward vengable malladie  
In euery membre gan rote & putrefie,  
That al the hair aboute hym environ  
To all that felte it was venym & poisoun.

988 but the latter  
was confirmed  
in power by  
his soldiers,  
whereupon  
Galerius went  
mad; his blood  
became cor-  
992 rupt, his body  
rotted.

Lik a lazeer, coorbid bak & chyne,  
In this while on Cristen most vengable,  
To hym auailed no maner medecyne.  
But ther was oon in Cristes feith ful stable  
That spak to\* hym with langage ful notable,  
In\* woordes fewe concludyng in substauce,  
1000 "The grete Iub[i]ter hath take on the vengauce."

996 He was like a  
leper, but did  
not cease his  
persecutions;  
and one who  
was of Christ's  
faith said to  
him:

And ouermor, for short conclusioun,  
With a bolde spirit to hym began abraide:  
"It is nat Iubiter worsheped in this toun,  
1004 In the Capitoile set," sothli as he saide, —  
"But Iubiter that was born of a maide,  
Which wil nat suffre, of that thou dost endure,  
1008 That ony medicyne sholde the recure.

"The great  
Jupiter has  
taken ven-  
geance on you.  
1004 Not the  
Jupiter wor-  
shipped in  
this town and  
set in the  
Capitol, but  
the Jupiter  
1008 who was born  
of a maid.  
He will suffer  
no medicine  
to cure you."

Lik a tiraunt be vengauce furious,  
At myscheef deieth, as olde bookis telle,  
Perpetueli with cruel Cerberus  
Vpon the wheel of Ixion to duell." —  
1012 For his demerites with Tantalus in hell,  
Ther to resceyue his fynal last guerdoun  
Which coude on martirs haue no compassioun.

It was his ioye for to sheede her blood,  
1016 Sent out [his] lettres to dyuers regiouns,  
Lik a slih wolff, rauynous & wood,  
To slen martirs be dyuers passiouns.  
1020 Lik his desert resceyued his guerdouns;  
Horrible deth first dide hym heer confounde,  
With Furies infernal lith now in hell[e] bounde.

1016 It was his joy  
to slay mar-  
tyrs, and he  
received his  
reward with the  
Furies in hell.

990. wex] was H, J, P. 999. to] onto B, R, J.  
1000. In] In his B, R, J, P, H 5.  
1003. to hym began] hym he gan R.  
1005. In] mydde H, Myd R 3 — he] I, J, P.  
1022. Furies] furious R.

[How maxence the Emperour enemy to cristys feith  
myscheuesly ended.] <sup>1</sup>

After Galerius,  
the emperor  
Maxentius  
came with a  
piteous face  
before Bochas.

**A**FFTIR Galerius cruel violence  
A Geyn Cristene blood, as Bochas heer hap told, 1024  
With pitous cheer themperour Maxence  
Cam tofor Bochas, of age nat ful old,  
Famous in armys, sturdi, fressh & bold,  
Al-be he entrid nat as enheritour, 1028  
Took upon hym to regne as emperour.\*

He too was an  
enemy of  
Christ's faith;  
and he was  
suddenly slain  
and cast into  
the Tiber like a  
rotten dog.

To Cristes feith he was also enemy;  
Aftir soone he loste his gouernance,  
Of infortunye slay[e]n sodenly,— 1032  
God on tirauntes vn-warly takith vengauce.  
Of whos buryyng was maad non ordenaunce,\*  
For he was nat resceyued of the ground,  
But caste in Tibre lik a roten hounde. 1036

[How Lucynyus enemy to cristes feith was slayn.] <sup>2</sup>

Licinius, the  
Dane, who  
became em-  
peror, had an  
enemy,  
Maximin,  
who was slain  
in Tarsus.

**¶** Next tofor Bochas cam Lycynyvs,  
A kniht of Denmark, born of riht good lyne,  
Which had an enemy, the book reherseth þus,  
An hardi kniht callyd Maxymyne, 1040  
Chose a capteyn with themperour Constantyne;  
To Cristes feith he bar gret enmyte,  
Slayn anon aftir in Tarce\* the cite.

And Licinius  
persecuted the  
Christians and  
suddenly went  
mad. He  
allowed no  
Christian to  
abide in his  
house and  
began a war  
against Con-  
stantine, and,  
twice defeated,

Of whos deth Lycynyvs was glad, [p. 377] 1044  
Gan ageyn Cristene gret persecucioun,  
In his procedyng sodenli wex mad.  
Which comaundid of fals presumpcioun  
Whan he began doon execucioun, 1048  
That no Cristene nowher hym beside  
Bi no condicioun sholde in his hous abide.  
This Licynyvs, which falsli dide erre  
Ageyn our feith Cristen men tassaille, 1052  
Geyn Constantyn of newe he gan a werre;

1029. emperour] gouernour B, J.

1034. ordenaunce] menciou B.

1038. riht good of lyne R.

1043. Tarce] Trace B, J, R 3, R.

1052. Cristen] & Cristen H, R 3. 1053. began H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 154 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 154 verso.



But of his purpos in sooth he dede faille:  
 For he was twies discourfited in bataille  
 Be Constantyn; onys in Hungrye, 1056  
 Next in Grece, beside Ebalie.

Thus Constantyn thuruh his hih renoun finally  
 Gat nih al Grece & eueri gret cite,\* submitted.  
 Al-be Lycynyvs stood in rebellioun 1060  
 Geyn Constantyn, both on lond & se.  
 But whan he sauh it wolde non oþer be,  
 He myht[e] nat escapen in no place,  
 Put hool hymself in Constantynes grace. 1064

But Constantyn, for his rebellioun, But Constantine put him  
 Gaff iugement in haste that he be ded, to death  
 Lest in the cite wer maad dyuisioun to keep the  
 Be Lycynyvs, wherof he stood in dreed. 1068 peace.  
 This same while, as Bochas took [good] heed,  
 Ther cam toforn hym, with cheeris ful pitous,  
 Brethre tweyne, Constantyn & Crispus.

[Off Constantyne and Crispus & how Dalmacyus was  
 slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**O Constantyn, of whom I spak toforn, 1072 Constantine  
 Thei wer sonys, Constantyn & Crispus. had two sons,  
 The same tweyne, of o mooder born, Constantine  
 Cam tofor Bochas; his book reherseth thus. and Crispus,  
 With hem cam eek oon Lycynyvs, 1076  
 Sone to\* Licynyus which in Roome toun  
 Afforn was slayn for his rebellioun.

Constantyn his werris to gouerne whom, together  
 Made hem vikeres, the silue same thre. 1080 with a son of  
 Echon riht wis, & koude weel discerne Licinius, he  
 What myhte auaille most to ther cite, made generals.  
 Tencrece the proffit of the comounte.  
 Ther namys tolde, Constantyn & Crispus, 1084  
 Tofor remembrid, with hem Licynyvs.

Whil these thre vikeris vndir themperour They governed  
 Gouvernid Roome, as knihtis riht\* famous, Rome at the  
 In Alisaundre roos up a gret errour 1088 time Arius,

1059. cite] contre B, J. 1069. good] om. R, J, P, H 5.  
 1077. to] of B. 1087. riht] most B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 155 recto.

a false priest,  
began his  
heresy and  
was excom-  
municated.

Bi a fals preest Icallid Arryus,  
To our beleue a thyng contraryous.  
And for he dide ageyn our feith so werche,  
Bi a decre he was put out of cherche. 1092

His error was  
shewn to be  
damnable by a  
council  
of 318 bishops  
at Nicea.

Bi a scen at Bithynye ful notable,  
In Nicea, a famous gret cite,  
This errour was preuid ful dampnable:  
Thre hundred\* bisshopis wer present ther, parde, 1096  
And eihene, the cronicle who list see.  
And alle thes clerkis of o sentence ilik  
Preeuyd Arryus a fals[e] heretik.

During this  
time Constan-  
tine slew his  
three generals,  
in favour of  
his cousin  
Delmatus,

This same tyme, bookis specesife 1100  
How Constantyn of hasti cruelte,  
The saide vikeres, nih of his allie,  
Feyned a cause to slen hem all[e] thre.  
No cause rehersed nor told of equite, 1104  
Saf onli this, in which he gan proceede,  
To make his cosyn Dalmacivs to succede.

who was  
shortly after-  
wards killed  
by his own  
soldiers.

But his fauour was nat fortunat  
Toward Dalmacius, nor gracious in sentence, 1108  
Among whos knihtes fill a sodeyn debat,  
Constantyn ther beyng in presence.  
Dalmacius, withoute reuerence,  
With sharpe suerdis, to speke in woordes fewe, 1112  
Vnto the deth was woundid & Ihewe.

[Off the brethre Constaunce & Constancyus & how  
Magnencyus & decyus moordred hem self.]<sup>1</sup>

Both Con-  
stans and  
Constantius,  
young brothers  
of Constantine,  
wanted to be  
emperor, and  
so they fought  
one another.

¶ Than cam Constans and Constancius,  
Yonge brethre, thus writ myn auctour,  
To Constantyn in tyme of Arryvs. 1116  
And ech of hem be ful gret labour  
Dide his peyne to regne as emperour,  
Til at the laste, breeffi for to seie,  
Euerich of hem gan othir to werreye. 1120

Constans had  
nine battles  
with Sapor and  
finally over-  
came him.

This saide Constans is entrid Perse-lond;  
Nyne tymes he fauht ageyn Sapore,  
The same kyng, as ye shal vndirstond,

1092. he] *om.* H. 1093. a scen] a Sene R, a Sceno H, assent  
J, P, a scene R 3 — at] in H. 1094. Niceyne P.  
1096. hundred] C. B. 1102. so nyh R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 155 recto.

- That with Romeyns hadde fouht affore. 1124  
 But fynalli Constans hath hym so bore,  
 To holde the feelde he myhte nat endure;  
 For upon hym fill the disconfiture.
- His fortune gan to chaungen anon riht, [p. 378] 1128  
 Whan that he lefte to be vertuous;  
 He was in Spaigne slay[e]n be a kniht,  
 In Castel Tunge, callid Magnencius.  
 Than was non lefft but Constancivs; 1132  
 The Romeyn kni[h]tis, destitut echon,  
 Ches hem an emperour callid Vetramon.
- ¶ This Vetramon was ferr [i]ronne in age,  
 Bareyn of witt, koude non lettrure, 1136  
 Nor in knihthod had no gret corage,  
 Nor was nat hable to studien in scripture,  
 Nor lik an emperour no while to endure;  
 For Constancius, of whom I spak now late, 1140  
 With this Vetremon cast hym to debate.
- This Vetremon hath lefft his estat,  
 List nat werreye ageyn Constancius,  
 Forsook the feeld[e], loued no debat. 1144  
 But of Spaigne, myn auctour writeth þus,  
 As I wrot late, how that Magnencius  
 Geyn Constancivs *witb* suerd[e], spere & sheeld  
 Presumed proudli for to holde a feeld. 1148
- To gret damage & hyndryng of the toun,  
 For many Romeyn thilke day was ded,  
 Beside a cite which callid was Leoun;  
 Til at the laste, of *verray* coward dreed, 1152  
 Magnencivs, which capteyn was & hed  
 Ageyn Constancius, hath the feeld forsake.  
 Loo, how Fortune can hir chaunges make!
- Magnencivs for *verray* sorwe & shame 1156  
 Bood no lenger, but gat hym a sharp kniff,  
 Sool be hymself, wher[of] he was to blame,  
 Roof thoruh his herte & loste [so] his lyff.  
 His brothir Dencivs, partable of the stryff, 1160

But when he ceased to be virtuous, his fortune changed; and he was slain in Spain by Magnentius and succeeded by Vetrico,

who was old and illiterate and no great soldier; and when Constantius made war on him he abdicated.

Magnentius, however, resisted Constantius, but finally he fled out of cowardice.

and pierced his heart with a knife. His brother Decius hanged himself.

1131. Castel Tunge] Castiltunge H, Castrell tunge J, Castyl tong P — Mangnencius R, H, Maxencius J, Magvencius R 3, Magnentius P.

1134. callid] callid hym R, H 5, om. P — Vetrico P.

1148. proudli] stoutly H. 1157. gat] gaff R.

1158. wherof] wher R, J. 1160. Demecyus H — the] his H.

Aboute his necke cast a myhti corde  
And heeng hymself[e], bookis so recorde.

Constantius made his uncle Gallus governour of France, a false tyrant soon slain and succeeded by Silvanns, who was assassinated.

Constancius ches aftir hym Gallus,  
His vncles brothir, to gouerne Fraunce; 1164

Was a fals tiraunt, cruel [and] outraious,  
Soone aftir slayn for his mysgouernaunce.  
Another viker for his disobeissaunce,  
Callid Siluanvs, be iugement was slayn; 1168  
For which in France ful many a man was fayn.

[How Constantyne baptized bi Siluester was cured  
of his lepre.]<sup>1</sup>

I shall now make a digression to Constantine, because Bochas says little about this notable man.

OFF this mateer stynte I wil awhile  
And folwe myn owne strange oppynyoun,  
Fro Constancius turne away my stile, 1172

To his fadir make a digressioun,  
Cause Bochas maketh but short mencion  
Of Constantyn, which be record of clerkis,  
Was so notable founde in al his werkis. 1176

Born in Britain, son of St. Helena, and chosen emperor, he was grievously attacked by leprosy

This myhti prince was born in Breteyne,  
So as the Brut pleyntli doth vs lere;  
His hooli moodir callid was Heleyne,  
He in his daies most knihtli & enteere. 1180  
Of marcial actis he knew al the maneerz,  
Chosen emperour for his hih noblesse,  
Fill to [be] lepre, cronicles expresse.

and advised to bathe in a piscina filled with the innocent blood of children.

His soor so greuouus that no medecyne  
Mihte auail his seeknesse to recure; 1184

He [was] counsailed to make a gret piscyne,  
With innocent blood of childre that wer pure  
Make hym cleene of that he did endure. 1188  
Thoruh al Itaille childre anon wer souht,  
And to his\* paleis be ther moodris brouht.

The strange noise and hideous crying of their tender mothers was so dreadful to hear,

It was gret routhe to beholde & see,  
Of tendre moodres to heere the sobbyng, 1192  
Be furious constreynt of ther aduersite,

1169. a] *om.* H.

1170. I will stynt R, H, R 3, H 5.

1181. he] *om.* R.

1186. piscyne] puyssyne H. 1190. his] ther B, the J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 155 verso.

- Hir clothes to-rent, bedewed *with* weeping.  
 The straunge noise of ther hidous crying  
 Ascendid up, that ther pitous clamour 1196  
 Kam to the eris of themperour,  
 Of which[e] noise themperour was agrised. that the  
 Whan that he knew ground & occasioun emperor  
 Of this mateer, afforn told & deuysed, 1200 was horrified;  
 This noble prince gan haue compassioun; and climbing  
 And for to stynte the lamentacioun high on the  
 Of all the women ther beyng in presence, stair of mercy  
 Of merciful pite hath chaungid his sentence. 1204 he sent them  
 all home un-  
 harmed.  
 This glorious, this gracious emperour  
 Is clomb of merci so hih vpon the staire,  
 Spared nouth vitaille\* nor his tresour,  
 Nor his langour that dide hym so appaire. 1208  
 With ful glad cheer[e] maad hem to repaire;  
 Where thei cam sori to Roome the cite,  
 Thei hom returned glad to ther contre.  
 Roial compassioun dide in his herte myne; [p. 379]1212 His heart was  
 Ches to be sik rather than blood to sheede, penetrated by  
 His brest enlumyned with\* grace which is dyuyne, royal compas-  
 Which fro the heuene dide vpon hym sprede. sion and he  
 He wolde nat suffre innocentis bleede, 1216 chose to be ill  
 Preferryng pite & merci mor than riht; rather than  
 He was visitid vpon the next[e] niht. shed the blood  
 of innocents.  
 Petir and Poule to hym dede appere, The next night  
 Sent fro the Lord as heuenli massagers, 1220 Peter and Paul  
 Bad Constantyn been of riht good cheere, appeared to  
 "For he that sit aboute the nyne speeris, him and bade  
 The Lord of Lordis, Lord of lengest yeeris, him be of good  
 Wil that thou wete, — haue it weel in mynde, — 1224 cheer: "You  
 In mount Serapti thou shalt thi leche fynde. will find you  
 leech on Mt.  
 Serapti.  
 God of his grace list the to visite, "God has  
 To sheede blood because that thou dost spare; sent us to  
 He hath vs sent thi labour for to quyte; 1228 reward your  
 Tidyngis brouht of helthe & thi weelfare labour; Pope  
 Pope Siluester to the shal declare, Sylvester will  
 tell you how  
 you shall be  
 cured."

1195. of] and R, &amp; H, R 3, H 5.

1196. pitous] hidous H.

1203. Of] And H. 1205. 2nd this] &amp; this H.

1207. vitaille] his vitaille B, R, H — his] om. H, R 3, P.

1209. hem] home H.

1214. with] bi B, J, P. 1217. mercy and pite R.

- As we haue told[e], be riht weel assured,  
Of thi seeknesse how thou shalt be recurid, 1232
- This Sylvester did, and baptising him, he became well.  
To mount Serapti in al hast that thou seende,  
Suffre Siluester come to thi presence."  
Souht & founde, breefli to make an eende,  
Resceyued aftir *with* deu reuerence, 1236  
Dide his deueer of enteer dilligence,  
Lik as the lyff of Siluester hath deuised,  
Be grace maad hool, whan he was baptised.
- His flesh was suddenly made white by washing in the piscina of holy baptism.  
His flesh renewed and sodenly maad\* whiht 1240  
Be thries wasshyng in the fressh piscyne  
Of holi baptem, welle of most deliht,  
Wher the Hooli Gost did[e] hym enlumyne.  
Enfourmyd aftir be teching & doctryne 1244  
Of Siluester, lik as myn auctour seith,  
Of alle articles that longe onto our feith.
- The font of porphyry was afterwards encircled with a ring of gold, and pearls and fine stones at Constantine's expense.  
The font was maad[e] of porfirie stoon,  
Which was aftir be cost of Constantyn 1248  
*With* a round bie, that dide aboute gon,  
Of gold & perle & stonis that wer fyn;  
Myd of the font, riht up as a lyn,  
Vpon a piler of gold a laumpe briht, 1252  
Ful of fyn bawme, that brente day &\* niht.
- He also provided of pure gold a pillar, a lamb, a lamb, an image of Our Saviour,  
A lamb of gold he did also prouyde,  
Set on this font vpon a smal pileer,  
Which lik a conduit vpon eueri side 1256  
Shad out water as eny cristal cleer,  
On whos riht side an ymage most enteer  
Was richeli forgid of our Saueour,  
Al of pure gold, that coste gret tresour. 1260
- and one of John the Baptist.  
And of this lamb vpon the tothir side,  
An image set longe to endure  
Of Baptist lohn, with lettres for tabide  
Graue coriousli, & this was the scripture: 1264  
"Ecce Agnus Dei, that did for man endure,  
On goode Friday offrid up his blood,  
To saue mankynde starf upon the rood."

1232. recurid] cured R. 1233. that] *om.* R.  
1240] His flesh his senewes maad sodenli whiht B, J; R and  
H 5 *omit* 2nd his.  
1241. puyssyne H. 1246. longeth to R.  
1253. day &] al the B, J. 1255. this] his R.  
1256. conduct R. 1264. was] *om.* R.

- He leet also make a gret censeer  
 Al of gold, fret with perles fyne,  
 Which be nyhte\* as Phebus in his speer  
 Thoruh al the cherch most fresshli did[e] shyne;  
 Ther wer fourti stonis iacynctyne.  
 Appollos temple, myn auctour writ the same,  
 Was halwid newe in Seynt Petris name.
- The Romeyn templis, that wer bilt of old,  
 He hath fordoon with al ther maumetrie;  
 Ther false goddis of siluer & of gold  
 He hath tobroke vpon ech partie.  
 This goodli prince, of goostli policie,  
 Set of newe statutis of gret vertu  
 To been obseruid in name of Crist *Iesu*.
- ¶ The firste lawe, as I reherse can,  
 In ordre set with ful gret reuerence,  
 That Crist *Iesu* was sothfast god & man,  
 Lord of Lordis, Lord of most excellence,  
 "Which hath this day, of his benyuolence,  
 Cured my lepre, as ye haue herd deuysed,  
 Be blissid Siluester whan I was baptised.
- This gracious Lord, my souereyn Lord *Ihesu*,  
 From hen[ne]s-foorth, for short conclusioun,  
 I wil that he, as Lord of most vertu,  
 Of feithful herte & hool affecioun  
 Be worsheped in euery regioun; —  
 No man so hardi my biddeng to disdeyne,  
 List he incurre of deth the greuous peyne."
- ¶ Folwyng the day callid the secounde, [p. 380]  
 This Constantyn ordeyned a decre,  
 That who that euere in [the] toun wer founde  
 Or ellis-wher aboute in the contre, —  
 What-euer he were, of hih or louh degre,  
 That blasffemed the name of Crist *Iesu*,  
 Be doom sholde haue of deth a pley[n] issu.
- ¶ The thridde day, in euery mannys siht,  
 Bi a decre confermed & maad strong,  
 To any Cristene who that dide vnriht

1268 Also a great censer of gold and pearls that shone like the sun, and 40 jacinths. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter's

1272

and destroyed the Roman temples and broke the images of the false gods, and enacted new statutes of great virtue.

1280

The first declared that Christ *Iesu* was truly god and man.

1284

1288

"From henceforth I will have him worshipped in every part of my empire upon pain of death."

1292

The second punished blasphemy of the name of Christ by death.

1300

The third provided for the confiscation of one half of the wealth

1304

1269. Al] om. H. 1270. nyhte] myhte B.  
 1272. wer] was R. 1277. Ther] The R.  
 1281. name] þe name H.  
 1295. of deth the] the deth off R.

- of any man who oppressed or wronged a Christian. Be oppressioun or [be] collateral wrong,  
It should[e] nat be taried ouer long,  
Who wer convict or gilty shal nat chese  
Be lawe ordeyned halff his good to lese. 1308
- The fourth gave to the pope the prerogative of ruling the priests as the king rules his temporal lords. ¶ The fourthe day, among[es] Romeyns all  
This pryuylege pronouncid in the toun,  
Youe to the pope sitting in Petris stall, 1312  
As souereyn hed in euery regioun  
To haue the reule and iurediccious  
Of preestis alle, allone in alle thyng,  
Of temporal lordis lich as hath the kyng. 1316
- The fifth granted freedom to the church and the right of asylum to fugitives. ¶ To the cherche he granted gret franchise  
The fife day & special liberte:  
Yif a feloun in any maner wise  
To fynde socour thidir dide flee, 1320  
Witbynne the boundis fro daunger to go fre,  
To been assurid & haue ther ful refuge  
From execucioun of any temporal iuge.
- The sixth forbade men to build churches without a licence from the bishop. ¶ No man presume witbynne no cite, — 1324  
The sixte day, he gaff this sentence, —  
No man so hardi, of hih nor lough degre,  
To beelde no cherche, but he haue licence,  
Of the bisshop beyng in presence; 1328  
This to seyne, that he in his estat  
Bi the pope afforn be approbat.
- The seventh decreed that the tenth part of all the royal possessions should be appropriated annually for building churches. ¶ The seuenthe\* day, this lawe he did eek make:  
Of all pocessiouns which that be roiall, 1332  
The tenthe part [y]eerli shal be take  
Be iugis handis, in parti & in all,  
Which[e] tresour thei delyuere shall,  
As the statut doth pleynli specefie, 1336  
Hool & enteer cherchis to edefie.
- On the eighth day Constantine took off his royal garments, and kneeling down before St. Peter, ¶ The eihte day meekli he ded hym quite,  
With gret reuerence & humble affeccoun,  
Whan he did of al his clothes white 1340  
And cam hymself on pilgrymage doun  
Tofor Seynt Petir of gret deuocioun;  
Natwithstondyng his roial excellence,  
Made his confessioun in open audience. 1344

1310. fourthe] fourty R.

1315. 2nd alle] on H.

1331. seuenthe] vij te B.

1335. Whiche] witb H.



- His crowne take of, knelyng thus he saide  
 With weepynge eyen & vois most lamentable,  
 And for sobbyng as he myht abraide:  
 "O blissid Iesu, o Lord most merciabe,  
 1348 Lat my teres to the be acceptable;  
 Resseyue my prayer; my request nat refuse,  
 As man most synful, I may me nat excuse.
- I occupied thestat of the emperour;  
 1352 Of thi martirs I shadde the hooli blood,  
 Spared no seyntes in my cruel error,  
 The to pursue fell, furious & wood.  
 Now blissid Iesu, most gracious & most good,  
 1356 Peised & considered myn importable offense,  
 I am nat worthi to come in thi presence,
- Nor for to entre into this hooli place,  
 Vpon this ground vnhabable for to duell,  
 1360 To openen myn eyen or to left up my face;  
 But of thi merci so thou me nat repell,  
 As man most synful, I come vnto thi well,  
 Thi welle of grace and merciful pite  
 1364 For to be wasse of myn iniquite."
- This example in open he hath shewed,  
 His staat imperial of meeknesse leid aside,  
 1368 His purpil garnement with teres al bedewed;  
 Suerd nor sceptre nor hors upon to ride  
 Ther was non seyn, nor baners splaied wide;  
 Of marcial tryumphes ther was no tokne founde,  
 1372 But cryng merci, themperour lay plat to grounde.
- The peeplis gladnesse was medlid with wepyng,  
 And ther wepyng was medlid with gladnesse,  
 To seen an emperour and so notable a kyng  
 1376 Of his free chois shewe so gret meeknesse.  
 Thus entirmedlid was ioie & heuynesse:  
 Heuynesse for passid old vengauce,  
 With newe reioisshyng of gostli repentaunce.
- This ioye was lik a feeste funerall, [p. 381] 1380  
 In folk of custum that doon ther besi cure  
 To brynge a corps, which of custum shall

removed his  
 crown and  
 confessed,  
 weeping and  
 with a sorrow-  
 ful voice, that  
 he was a sinful  
 man,

that he had  
 shed the blood  
 of saints and  
 martyrs.  
 "I am not  
 worthy, blessed  
 Jesus, to  
 appear in thy  
 presence;

but I come to  
 thee to be  
 washed clean  
 of my  
 iniquity."

This example  
 he gave in  
 public, bedew-  
 ing his  
 garments  
 with tears and  
 laying aside  
 his royal  
 insignia.

The people  
 wept for joy  
 to see so  
 notable an em-  
 peror and king  
 shew such  
 meekness.

It was like a  
 funeral where  
 the corpse  
 comes to life,

1345. thus nelyng R. 1347. as] so as H. 1349. be to be H.  
 1352. the] om. H, an R. 1354. cruel in myn error H.  
 1355. The] Them (but corrected) H, Them P — fell] most P.  
 1369. nor] ne H. 1377. was ioie] wer loyes H.

- and everybody  
laughs and  
weeps at once.
- Haue al the rihtis of his sepulture,  
And in this tyme, of sodeyn auenture  
To lyf ageyn restored be his bonys,  
Causyng his freendis to lauhe & weepe attonis. 1384
- Thus the people  
rejoiced and  
wept by turns  
to see their  
emperour asking  
mercy for his  
sins.
- Semblabli dependyng atween tweyne,  
The people wepte, & therwith reioisshyng  
To seen ther emperour so pitousli compleyne,  
For his trespacis merci requeryng:  
Of ioie and sorwe a gracious medlyng.  
That day was sey[e]n gladnesse meynt *with* moone,<sup>1392</sup>  
*With* weepyng lauhtré, & al in o persone. 1388
- Afterwards he  
dug up 12  
stones with his  
own hands and  
put them into  
12 coffins, in  
memory of the  
12 apostles, and  
built the church  
of St. Lateran  
in their name.
- Aftir al this he digged up hymselue  
Stones twelue, wher he lay knelyng,  
[And] putte hem in cofynes tuelue,  
On the tuelue postlis deuoutli remembryng,  
Compassed a ground large for beeldyng,  
Beside his paleys caste theron to werche  
In Cristes name to sette up ther a cherche. 1396 1400
- He also made  
a law, that if  
any pauper or  
cripple became  
a Christian he  
should receive  
a new outfit of  
garments and  
20 shillings.
- The place of olde callid Lateranence,  
Bilt and edefied in thapostlis name.  
Constantynvs bar al the dispense,  
Ordeyned a lawe, myn auctour seith the same,  
Yif any poore, nakid, halt or lame  
Resceyue wolde the feith of Crist *Iesu*,  
He sholde be statut be take to this issu: 1404
- In his promys yif he wer founde trewe,  
That he wer nat be feynyng no faitour,  
He sholde first be spoiled & clad newe  
Be the costage off the emperour,  
Tuenti shillyng resceyue to his socour,  
Of which resseit nothyng was *with*drawe,  
Be statut kept & holde as for a lawe. 1408 1412
- I cannot re-  
count all his  
noble deeds and  
victories; but  
they are all  
told in the  
Legend of  
Sylvester,
- It wer to longe to putte [al] in memorie,  
His hih prowesse & his notable deedis,  
And to rehearse[n] euery gret victorie  
Which that he hadde with hostis that he ledis;  
And to remembre al his gracious speedis, 1416

1394. digged] gigid (*partly erased*) R.

1397. On] Of R.

1398. large for] for large (biggyng) H.

1409. fatour R, H, fantour R 3.

1418. 1st that] *om.* H, R 3 — 2nd that] which H.

- The surplusage, who list [to] comprehende, 1420  
 Lat hym of Siluestre reede the legende.
- And among othir, touchyng his visioun,  
 Which that he hadde, in cronicles men may lere,  
 Whan that he slepte in his roial dongoun, 1424  
 How Crist to hym did graciousli\* appeere,  
 Shewed hym a cros, & seide as ye shal heere:  
 "Be nat afferd upon thi foon to falle,  
 For in this signe thou shalt ouercome hem alle." 1428
- Be which auyseoun he was maad glad & liht  
 Thoruh Goddis grace & heuenli influence.  
 First in his baner, that shon so cleer & briht,  
 The cros was bete, cheef tokne of his diffence. 1432  
 Slouh the tiraunt that callid was Maxence,  
 Aftir whos deth[e], thoruh his hih renoun  
 Of al thempire he took pocessioun.
- In which estat he meyntened trouthe & riht, 1436  
 Vpon al poore hauyng compassioun,  
 Duryng his\* tyme holde the beste kniht  
 That owher was in any regioun,  
 Of Cristes feith thymperial champioun, 1440  
 Thoruh his noble knihtli magnificence  
 To alle Cristene protectour & diffence.
- Aftir his name, which neuer shal appall,  
 Chaunged in Grece the name of Bizante; 1444  
 Constantynople he did it aftir call,  
 And on a steede of bras, as men may see,  
 Manacyng of Turkis the contre,  
 He sit armyd, a gret suerd in his hond 1448  
 Them to chastise that rebelle in that lond.
- Reioisshye ye folkis that born been in Breteyne,  
 Callid othirwise Brutis Albioun,  
 That hadde a prince so notabli souereyne 1452  
 Brouht forth & fostrid in your regioun,  
 That whilom hadde the domynacioun,  
 As cheef monarche, prince & president,  
 Ouer al the world, from est til occident. 1456

especially his  
 vision of  
 Christ,  
 who shewed  
 him a cross  
 saying, "By  
 this sign shalt  
 thou conquer,"

which so  
 pleased  
 Constantine  
 that he had  
 the cross  
 beaten in his  
 banner, and  
 slaying Max-  
 ence, took  
 possession of  
 the whole  
 empire.

He ruled  
 justly, having  
 compassion on  
 the poor, and  
 was held the  
 best knight of  
 his time.

He named  
 Byzantium  
 Constantino-  
 ple; and there  
 he still sits  
 armed on a  
 steed of brass,  
 menacing the  
 country of  
 the Turks.

Rejoice,  
 Britons,  
 that your land  
 brought forth  
 such a prince,  
 chief monarch  
 of all the  
 world!

1425. did graciousli] graciousli did B.

1426. ye] om. R.

1429. glad] om. R.

1432. bete] bore H.

1438. his] this B.

1450. ye] the R.

1455. monarchye H.

When he died  
the sun was  
not seen for  
a month,  
and there was  
a great comet  
in the south  
that drew  
towards his  
palace in  
Nicomedia.

Tyme of his deth, that moneth of þe yeer  
Phebus nat seyn, *witbdrouh* his feruent heete;  
And longe afforn[e] large, brod & cleer,  
Toward Affrik shewed a gret comete, 1460  
Alway encresyng, drouh toward the sete  
Of Nichomedie, shon erli & eek late,  
Wher in his paleis he passed into fate.

[How Iulian Apostata enemy to cristys bi fals Illu-  
sions was chose Emperour and aftir slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

After Con-  
stantine came  
Julian the  
Apostate, his  
cousin, a cursed  
man.

A FFTIR the deth of this marcial man,— [p.382] 1464  
I meene this noble worthi *Constantyn*, —  
Kometh Thapostata, cursid Iulian,  
Which be discent to *Constantyn* was cosyng.  
His gynyng cursid, hadde a cursid fyn, 1468  
Entred religioun, as bookis specefie,  
Vnder a colour of fals ipocrisie.

who entered re-  
ligion out of  
hypocrisy,  
a double iniquity.  
Fie on  
such feigned  
perfection!

It hath be seid[e] of antiquite,  
Wher that ther is dissymuled hoolynesse, 1472  
It is icallid double iniquite, —  
Fih on al suich feyned parfinesse!  
For symulacioun curid *witb* doubilnesse  
And fals[e] semblaunt with a sobre face, 1476  
Of alle [fals] sectes stonde ferthest out of grace.

For a time he  
devoted himself  
to religion, and  
then, wearyng  
of his order,  
forsook it and  
gave himself up  
to necromancy.

A certeyn space, as maad is mencion,  
To al pefeccioun he did hymself applie,  
Til he wex weri of his professioun, 1480  
Forsook his ordre bi apostacie.  
And first he gaff hym to nigromancye,  
Double Apostata, as *myn* auctour seith,  
First to his ordre & aftir to our feith. 1484

Constantius  
sent this root  
of hypocrisy to  
be governor of  
Gaul, where he  
conspired to  
get possession  
of the whole  
empire,

Bi ordynauce of *Constancivs*,  
This said Iulian, roote of ipocresie,  
Of *gouernaunce* froward & vicious,  
Was sent to Gaule with gret cheualrie 1488  
As viker chose the contre for to guye.

1461. sete] cite R.      1466. the Apostita H.  
1468. 1st cursid] om. R.      1472. ther] he R.  
1473. callid R.      1476. sobre] doubil H, soure J.  
1477. fals] om. J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 157 recto — How] So J.

Gat hym fauour & falsli gan conspire  
To haue pocessioun of al the hool empire.

And for he was nat likli to atteyne  
To that estat, he did his hert applie  
Another mene pleynli to ordeyne,  
Wikked spiritis to make of his allie,  
Becam a prentys to lerne sorcerye,  
To haue experience be invocaciouns  
To calle spiritis *with* his coniuiraciouns.\*

1492 and at first  
not succeeding,  
allied himself  
with wicked  
spirits and be-  
came an ap-  
prentice to  
sorcery,

1496

Be fals illusioun in the peplis sihte,  
Of wikked spiritis had so gret fauour, —  
A crowne of laurer upon his hed aliht, —  
Made folk to deeme, bi ful fals errour,  
It cam be myracle, to chese hym emperour.  
Which of trouthe as in existence  
Was but collusioun\* & feyned apparence.

1500 and made the  
people believe  
that a crown  
of laurel  
alighted  
on his head by  
miracle,  
whereas it  
was set there  
by the spirits  
to whom he  
sacrificed.

1504

With hem he hadde his conuersacioun,  
Spared nat to doon hem sacrefise  
*With* cerymonyes & fals oblacioun,  
And to thempire he roos up in this wise.  
Thestat resceyuyd, first he gan deuyse  
Ageyn Grekis, out of his contre ferre,  
To make hym strong with hem to haue a werre.

In this manner  
he was chosen  
emperor.

1508

The Feend a while was to hym fauourable,  
Gaf hym entre and pocessioun,  
And made hym promys for tabide stable  
In his lordship and domynacioun,  
To haue this world vndir subieccioun;  
Of which behest he stood in pereilous cas,  
Folwyng thoppynyoun of Pigtagoras.

He made war  
on Greece; and  
for a while the  
devil favoured  
him.

1516

¶ Pigtagoras hadde this oppinyoun:  
Whan men deide, anon aftir than  
Ther was maad[e] a translacioun  
Of his speryt in-tanothir man,  
A maner liknesse; the Bible telle can,  
The double speryt of grace & prophecie  
To Heliseus was grantid be Helye.

Following the  
opinion of  
Pythagoras,

1520

who believed  
in the trans-  
migration of  
souls,

1524

1491. To haue] off all R — al] *om.* R.

1496. Becam] he becarn H, J, R 3.

1498. coniuiraciouns] coniuiraciouns B. 1502. to] *om.* H.

1505. collusioun] intrusioun B, R, J, H 5.

1506. conuersaciouns H. 1508. oblaciouns H.

1511. Ageyn] geyn H. 1512. haue a] ha H.

- he thought that  
he himself had  
such a spirit,  
with all its  
knowledge and  
wisdom,
- Heeron concludyng, lik his oppynyoun,  
As Pictagoras affermed in sentence, 1528  
He that hadde ful poecessioun  
Of suich a speryt, in verray existence  
Sholde haue the same wisdam & science,  
The disposicioun aftir hym as blyue, 1532  
Which hadde that speryt whil he was heer alyue, —
- the spirit of  
Alexander:  
and Pluto en-  
couraged him  
in his belieif.
- Of gouernaunce and also of nature  
Resemblyn hym, of maneres & luyyng.  
And thus be fraude Pluto did his cure 1536  
To make Iulian to truste in eueri thyng,  
He hadde be berth the sperit of the kyng  
Callid Alisaundre, be which he sholde wynne  
This world be conquest, whan-euer hym list begynne.
- So he trusted  
in Pluto and  
the infernal  
gods.
- Thus gan he fonne & falle in fantasie 1541  
To truste on Pluto & goddis infernal,  
Thei sholde enhance hym bi his cheualrie  
For to posseede and reioysshe al, — 1544  
Suerd, sceptre, crowne and staat imperial,  
Passe Alisaundre in honour & in glorie  
And hym excelle in tryumphal victorie.
- He also trusted  
Satan, and  
became a  
mortal enemy  
to Christ's law  
and broke  
crosses and  
crucifixes.  
Jesus he called  
'Gallilee' and  
sometimes 'the  
Nazarene' in  
scorn.
- He trusted Sathan, be whom he was desceyuid, [p.383]  
To Cristes law becam mortal enmy; 1549  
Wher that euere that he hath parceyued  
Cros or crucifix, he brak hem vengabli.  
Be fals language he callid traitourly, 1552  
Crist Iesu he callid Gallile,  
And of despiht sumtyme Nazare.
- Ageyn our feith this tirant wex so wood,  
[And] ageyn Crist hadde so gret hatreede; 1556  
Slouh many martir & falsli shadde hir blood,  
An idolatre & renegat in deede.  
Heeld mortal werre *with* hem of Perse & Meede;  
Comyng to Perse, first he gan debate 1560  
Geyn Sapor kyng, of whom I spak but late.
- And he fought  
many wars
- Of Parthois also he entrid thoruh the rewm,  
Wher he fond no maneer resistence.  
And as he cam forbi Iherusalem, 1564

1528. in] this H.

1543. hym] *om.* H.1550. 1st that] *om.* H.

1558. &amp;] an H.

1529. He that] *bat* he H.

1545. Suerd] Off Swerde R.

1552. callith H.

1561. Sapor kyng] kyn Sapore H.

- To the Iewes of newe\* he gaf licence  
 To beelde the temple with gret dilligence,  
 In despiht, of purpos to do shame  
 To Cristene cherchis, bilt newe in Cristes name. 1568
- In this while he kauht a gret corage,  
 In a theatre maad brood in that toun,  
 Too wilde beestis cruel and sauage  
 Of seyntis blood to make oblacioun, 1572  
 Thei to deuoure men of religioun.  
 And alle Cristene of purpos to destroye,  
 His lust was set & al his worldly ioie.
- Bi an heraud that dide his host conveye, 1576  
 Of verray purpos to brynge hym in treyne,  
 Bi straunge desertis fond out a froward weye.  
 The heete importable did hym so constreyne,  
 Brente thoruh the harneys, felte so gret peyne; — 1580  
 The drye sondis, the heir infect with heete  
 Made many a man ther lyff in hast to lete.
- This froward tiraunt, knowyng no remedie,  
 Of cursid herte gan Crist Iesu blasffeme, 1584  
 And of malicious hatreed & envie,  
 Wood & furious, as it dide seeme,  
 Gan curse the Lord, that al this world shal deeme,  
 Crist Iesus, which of long pacience 1588  
 List nat be vengauce his\* malis recompence.
- A mor cruel was ther neuer non,  
 Nor mor vengable: nat Cerberus in hell,  
 Mortal enemy to goode men euerichon, 1592  
 Whos blasfemys and rebukis fell,  
 Be rehearsaile yif I sholde hem tell, —  
 I am afferd the venymous violence  
 Sholde infecte the heir with pestilence. 1596
- He cast out dartis mor bittir than is gall  
 Of blasfemye & infernal langage;  
 And in this while among his princis all  
 A kniht vnknowe, angelik of visage, 1600  
 Fresshly armyd, to punshen his outrage,

and let  
 the Jews  
 rebuild their  
 temple, to do  
 shame to  
 Christian  
 churches.

In Jerusalem  
 he offered  
 saints to wild  
 beasts and all  
 his joy  
 lay in the  
 destruction  
 of Christians.

A herald, who  
 guided his  
 army, led him  
 into a desert,  
 where the heat  
 killed many of  
 his men;

and this froward  
 tyrant,  
 knowing nothing  
 better, began  
 to curse  
 Christ, of  
 malicious  
 hatred.

A more cruel  
 and revengeful  
 man was  
 never seen, not  
 even Cerberus  
 in hell. His  
 blasphemies  
 would infect  
 the air with  
 pestilence if I  
 were to repeat  
 them.

During this  
 while an un-  
 known knight  
 appeared  
 among  
 his princes and  
 thrust a spear  
 into his heart.

1565. or newe] anon B, J, anone P — of newe he gaf] of newe  
 and of R.

1573. to] om. H.

1576. heraud] Heronde H, heraude J, herand R, Herald P.

1579. The] to H — hym] hem H. 1580. the] their H.

1589. his] this B. 1591. nat] om. H.

With a sharp spere, thoru euey synwe & veyne,  
Of this tiraunt roof the herte on tweyne.

Some men say  
this knight was  
Mercurius,

Bathid in his blood, this tiraunt fill doun lowe, 1604  
To God & man froward & odious.

Thouh for that tyme the kniht ne was nat knowe,  
Yit summe men seyn it was Mercurivus,  
Which bi the praicer of Basilius 1608  
This tiraunt slouh, as cronicles don\* us lere,  
Bi a myracle of Cristes mooder deere.

who, buried  
before in  
Cesarea, rose  
from his grave  
(a strange  
thing to see),  
arrayed himself  
in his armour,  
that hung  
beside his  
sepulchre, and  
mounted a  
horse.

This Mercurius, as bookes determyne,  
In Cesaria, a myhti strong cite, 1612  
Witbynne the contre callid Palestyne,  
Buried afforn, roos up at this iourne  
Out of his graue, a straunge thyng to see;  
An hors brouht to hym, arraied in his armure, 1616  
Which heeng toforn beside his sepulture.

The same  
armvure was  
not seen until  
the next even-  
ing, and Julian  
was struck  
down at mid-  
day.

The same armvure was nat seyn that niht  
Nor on the morwe at his graue founde 1620  
Til mydday hour, that Phebus shon ful briht,  
Whan Mercury\* gaf hym his fatal wounde,  
His blasfemye for euer\* to confounde.  
Which thyng accomplished, this myracle for to prue,  
He and his armure wer ther ageyn at eue. 1624

That was the  
sudden end of  
his blasphemy.  
His last words  
were, "Thou  
hast conquered,  
Gallilee." He  
cast his blood  
in the air in  
despite of Jesus.

Of his blasfemye this was the sodeyn wrak  
Which the tiraunt reseceyuid for his mede.  
The laste woord I fynde that he spak:  
"Thou Gallile hast ouercome in deede!" 1628  
Took the blood[e] that he did[e] bleede,  
This deuellissh man, deying in despeir,  
Despiht of Iesu cast up in the heir.

His body was  
flayed and his  
skin tanned  
and nailed to  
the gate of  
his palace by  
the Persian  
king Sapor.

His bodi flay[e]n & his skyn was take, [p. 384] 1632  
Tawed aftir be presept and biddying  
Souple and tendre as thei coude it make, —  
Sapor bad so, that was of Perse kyng,  
That men myht haue therof knowlechyng 1636  
Erli on morwe & at eue late,  
He did it naille upon his paleis gate.

1604. his] om. R, his oun H. 1605. To God &] To goode a R.  
1606. ne] om. H. 1607. seyn] seynt R.  
1609. don] doth B, J. 1621. Mercurius B, R, J.  
1622. euer] euermor B, H, R, P, H 5, R 3.  
1630 is misplaced before 1628 in H, correction indicated.  
1631. in] in to H.



- And to a cite that was callid Kaire,  
As cronicles make rehersaille,  
This Apostata wolde ofte a-day repaire  
To a woman, which hadde in hir entraille  
Spiritis closid, to make his dyuynaille.  
In whos wombe, bareyn & out of grace,  
Of wikkid feendis\* was the restyng\* place.
- This said[e] woman was a creature,  
The which afforn be cursid Iulian,  
Be his lyue his purpos to recure,  
In sacrificise was offrid to Sathan.  
And so as he with cursidnesse began,  
Swich was his eende, as all bookis tell,  
Whos soule *with* Pluto is buried deepe in hell.
- With this tiraunt Bochas gan wex[e] wroth  
For his most odious [hatful] fel outrage,  
And to reherse in parti he was loth  
The blasfemyes of his fell langage;  
For nouthur furye nor infernal rage  
May be comparid, *with* poisoun fret withynne,  
To the fals venym of this horrible synne.
- It is contrarie to alle goode thewes,  
And tofor God most abhomynable;  
Hatful to alle sauff to cursid shrewes:  
For of alle vices verray incomparable,  
Most contagious & most detestable,  
The mouth infect of suich infernal houndis  
Which eueri day sle Crist *with* newe woundis.
- Folk obstynat of purpos for the nonys,  
Of disposicioun furious & wood,  
Nat afferd to suere [by] Goddis bonys,  
With horrible othes of bodi, flesh & blood,  
The Lord dismembryng, most gracious, most good,  
His feet, his handis, armys, face & hed,  
Reende hym of newe, as thei wolde haue hym ded.
- The blissid Lord, which is inmortal,  
Thouh thei be dedli, thei wolde hym sle ageyn.  
Thei be erthli; he is celestial;
- 1640 During his lifetime this Apostate used to consult a woman in Cairo whose belly was the resting place of evil spirits,  
1644 and whom he afterwards offered up in sacrifice to Satan.  
1648  
1652  
1656 Bochas began to grow angry with this tyrant for his outrages and blasphemies. Neither fury nor infernal rage can be compared to blasphemy.  
1660 It is contrary to all virtue and abominable to God.  
1664  
1668  
1672  
1676 Obstinate folk of evil disposition swear horrible oaths by God's bones his body and blood, dismembering him of new, as if they would again have him dead.  
Although they are earthly and he celestial, they have no discretion;

1641. ofte] of R. 1643. his] hir H. 1645. feendis] spiritis  
B, J, P — restyng] duellyng B. 1648. his] hir H.  
1657. furye] om. R — nor] nor noon H, R 3, H 5.  
1667. Folkis H. 1669. by] om. R, J. 1672. armys handis H.

In froward wise thei be ouerseyn;  
 Discrecioun faileth; ther resoun is in veyn:  
 Al suich bla[s]ffemye, for short conclusioun,  
 Proceedith of pride & fals ambicioun. 1680

and it seems  
 to me that  
 they are very  
 ungrateful not  
 to do him  
 reverence, who  
 was nailed on  
 a crosse and  
 suffered death  
 for their sake.

It seemeth to me, thei haue foule failed  
 Of kynd[e]nesse to doon hym reuerence,  
 Which for ther loue upon a cros was nailed  
 To paie the\* raunsoun for mannys gret offence, 1684  
 Suffred deth with humble pacience,  
 Fals rebukyng, spittyng in his visage,  
 To bryng mankynde onto his heritage.

It all comes  
 from pride; and  
 Satan is the  
 original cause.  
 Julian was  
 most unfor-  
 tunate reigning  
 under him.

Fals surquedie that doth the hertis reise 1688  
 Of such blasfemours, as was this Iulian,  
 Whos gret empire myht nat countirpeise  
 Ageyn that Lord which is bothe God & man.  
 Thorigynal ground of pride was Sathan; 1692  
 Prince vndir hym most infortunat  
 Was this Apostata, regnyng in his estat.

What was the  
 end of this  
 cruel felon? He  
 was miracu-  
 lously pierced  
 to the heart  
 by a heavenly  
 knight.

What was the eende of this tiraunt horrible,  
 This cruel feloun, hatful to eueri wiht? 1696  
 Be sodeyn myracle to al his host visible,  
 Ther did appeere a verray heuenli kniht,  
 Most fresshli armyd & angelik of siht.  
 With a sharp spere, sitting on his steede, 1700  
 Made the tiraunt his herte blood to bleede.

His false gods  
 could not help  
 him nor all his  
 sorcery and  
 invocacions.

His false goddis myhte hym nat auaille,  
 His froward offryng doon to maumetrie,  
 Nor al his proude imperial apparaille, 1704  
 His inuocaciouns nor hatful sorcerye:  
 For this Apostata, that did his feith denye,  
 Among his knihtis slayn be deth sodeyne;  
 His soule dampned with Sathan depe in peyne. 1708

[How the Emperour Valence / slouh heremytes shad  
 cristen blood destroyed chirches & after was  
 brent.]<sup>1</sup>

Bochas next  
 turns to  
 Valens, and  
 first tells us  
 about the  
 perfect holiness

**B**OCHAS in hast[e] doth his stile dresse  
 Next to themperour þat callid was Valence,  
 Rehersing first the parfit hoolynesse

1684. the] ther B, R, J. 1685. þe deth H.  
 1700. sharp] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 158 recto.

- Of hermytis, that dide ther dilligence  
 To lyue in penaunce & in abstynence;  
 Forsook the world[e], & for Cristes sake  
 Into desert thei haue the weye take. 1712 of hermits, who  
 forsook this  
 world of vari-  
 ance for  
 Christ's sake,
- In this world heer thei list no lenger tarye, [p. 385] 1716 and lived far  
 away in the  
 deserts of  
 Egypt, where  
 the soil was  
 dry and there  
 was little food.
- Dyuers & double, of trust noun certeyn;  
 Ferr in Egipt to lyue solitarye,  
 Deepe in desertis, of folk nat to be seyn.  
 The soil was drye; of vitaille ful bareyn; 1720  
 The frutles treen up sered to the roote:  
 For Cristes loue thei thouhte that lyff most soote.
- This said Valence, of malis frowardli  
 To thes hermytes, that lyued in gret penaunce, 1724 Valens was  
 without cause  
 their enemy.  
 Wherever he  
 rode he  
 destroyed  
 churches and  
 shed Christian  
 blood.
- Causeles [to hem] was gret enmy,  
 Troubled hem & did hem gret greuaunce.  
 Lik a tiraunt set al on vengauunce,  
 Destroied cherchis with people that he ladde; 1728  
 And wher he rood Cristen blood he shadde.
- This mene while be robberyng & rauyne  
 In Mauritayne, which is a gret contre,  
 Ther was a prince that callid was Fyryne; 1732 In the mean-  
 while a prince  
 called Firmus  
 took upon him-  
 self to reign in  
 Cesarea, in  
 despite of the  
 Romans, so
- And in Cesarea, a famous gret cite,  
 For his extorsioun & his cruelte  
 He took upon hym, proudli ther regnyng,  
 Maugre [the] Romeyns to be crownid kyng. 1736
- Theodose the Firste, a manli man,  
 Was sent out his malys to withstonde  
 Be the bidding of Valentynyan,  
 Which that tyme thempire hadde on honde, 1740 Valens sent out  
 Theodosius,  
 co-emperor,  
 against him.  
 Firmus was  
 slain,
- Theodose was sent out to assaile  
 The saide Feryn, and slouh hym in bataille.
- Of which Feryn, be ful cruel hate, 1744 and his head  
 cut off and set  
 up on the gate  
 of Cesarea.
- In that contre presumptuousli regnyng,  
 Smet of his hed & set [it] on the gate  
 Of Cesaria; this was his eendying,  
 Which be intrusioun afforn was crownid king 1748

1716. lenger] lenger no R.

1722. thei] the R — most] so H.

1725. enmy] envye H. 1728. peeplis H.

1734. 1st his *is erased* H — 2nd his] gret H.

1735. ther] the R. 1737. man] knyht R.

1746. it] om. R. 1747] of Cesaria a Cite of gret bildyng H.

In Maurityne, oppressing them be dreed,  
As ye haue herd, for which he loste his hed.

Returning to  
Valens, Bochas  
says that out  
of froward  
cursedness to  
hisly church  
he slew all the  
hermits;

In this mateer Bochas doth nat soiourne  
Be non attendaunce nor no long dilligence, 1752  
But of purpos doth ageyn retourne  
To themperour that callid was Valence,  
Which, as I tolde, dide so gret offence  
To hooli cherech of froward cursidnesse, 1756  
Slouh al hermytes that bood in wildirnesse.

but God would  
not suffer such  
a tyrant to  
live long. The  
Goths rebelled  
for the oppres-  
sion of one of  
his princes

God wold nat suffre he sholde long endure,  
Graunteth no tiraunt to haue heer no long lyff;  
For be sum myscheef or sodeyn auenture 1760  
Thei deien be moordre, *with* dagger, suerd or kniff.  
The Gothois whilom ageyn hym\* gan a stryff, —  
For his outrage & gret oppressioun  
Thei ageyn Romeyns fill in rebellioun. 1764

called Maximus,  
and became so  
strong that they  
defeated Valens  
himself,

A prince off his callid Maxymvs  
Distressed hem bi so gret tiranye,  
Was vpon hem so contrarious, 1768  
That thei gadred al ther cheualrie  
And wex so strong vpon ther partie,  
That bi ther manhod, it fill of auenture,  
Thei on Valence made a disconfiture.

and went on  
robbing and  
destroying  
cities and towns  
and villages in  
Thrace. All  
this while  
Valens did not  
cease to per-  
secute the  
hermits.

Spared nat bi robberyng and pillage, 1772  
Slouh & brente many statli place,  
Cites, touns & many smal village,  
That wer famous withynne the lond of Trace.  
But al this while Valence gan enchace, 1776  
And causeles, of malis voluntarie,  
Pursued hermytes that lyued solitarie.

Collecting a  
new army, he  
proudly  
attacked the  
Goths, who  
defeated him  
again. So he  
fled and hid in  
a cottage,

And of newe this Valence gan ageyn  
Gret multitude of Romeyns to purchase, 1780  
And with his host[e] proudli be disdeyn  
Ageyn[es] Gothes cam down in-to Trace.  
But furiousli thei mette hym in the face,  
Wher lik a coward he turned his visage, 1784  
To saue his lyff lay hid in a cotage.

1759. to haue] *om.* J, P — no] *om.* J, P.

1762. geyn hym whilome H — ageyn hym] *om.* J, P — hym]  
hem B.

1776. enchace] enhance R.

1779. *This stanza is omitted in J.*

Thus fynalli this emperour Valence,  
 As ye haue herd, failed of his entent.  
 The Gothes folwed be cruel violence,  
 1788 As wilde woluyes\*, alle of oon assent,  
 The hous & hym to asshis thei haue brent.  
 Loo, heer the fyn, ye pryncis taketh heede,  
 Of tirauntis that\* seyntes blood do\* sheede! 1792

which the  
 Goths set on  
 fire, and was  
 burnt to ashes.  
 That is the end  
 of tyrants, who  
 shed the blood  
 of saints!

[Off kyng Amarycyus / and how Gracyan and  
 Theodosie destroyed temples of fals goddis / &  
 how gracyan was put to flight.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Aftir Valence, to God contrarious,  
 In al his werkis most froward of luyng,  
 Tofor Bochas cam Amaricus,  
 1796 Which of Gothes was whilom lord & kyng,  
 Of his gret age pitousli pleynyng,  
 Inflat and bolle, list make no delaies,  
 Slouh hymself to shorte his greuou daies.

After Valens,  
 Hermanric ap-  
 peared before  
 Bochas; once  
 king of the  
 Goths, he grew  
 old and  
 dropsical and  
 finally slew  
 himself.

¶ Than cam to Bochas\* the brother of Valence, [p.386]  
 The myhti emperour callid Gracian,  
 1801 Which hadde afforn[e] had experience  
 First with his vnclé Valentynyan  
 In thempire, as bookis telle can;  
 1804 And aftirward Theodosie & he  
 Hadde gouernaunce of Roome the cite.

Gratian,  
 Valens' brother,  
 and  
 Theodosius  
 ruled Rome.

Theodosie and Gracian of assent  
 Destroyed templis as in that partie  
 1808 Of false goddis; thei haue also down rent  
 The grete idoles & al suich maumetrye,  
 And ful deuoutli gan chirchis edefye.  
 And in this while, as Fortune list ordeyne,  
 1812 On Maxymvs was vikeer in Breteyne.

They destroyed  
 the temples of  
 false gods and  
 pulled down  
 idols and built  
 churches at the  
 time Maximus  
 was governor  
 of Britain.

An hardi kniht, al-be he did[e] varie  
 From his promys maad be sacrement;  
 In Breteyne list no lenger tarie, 1816

Maximus was a  
 hardy knight;

1787] In all his werkis most frowarde of entent H.

1789. woluyes] beestes B, J, beastes P.

1792. that] the B — do] to B.

1795. Amaricus] Arynacyus H, R 3, Hermericis P.

1798. bollen H.

1800. to Bochas] down B — brother] nephew P.

1802, 3 are transposed H, R. 1810. mawmentrye H.

1811. deuoute R. 1813. Maxymyan H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 158 verso.

- but, breaking  
his oath, he left  
Britain and  
attacked Gra-  
tian
- But into Gaule of hert & hool entent  
Geyn Gracian he sodenli is went.  
And as it fill, set be ther bothe auys,  
Thei hadde a bataille nat ferr out of Parys. 1820
- and put him to  
flight near  
Paris, through  
the bravery of  
Merobandus,  
one of his  
captains.
- This Gracian was ther put to fliht  
Bi the prowesse of a proud capteyn  
Callid Merobandus, was an hardi kniht,  
Which *with* his poweer hath so ouerleyn, 1824  
That Gracian was constreyned in certeyn,  
Whan his poweer myhte nat availe  
Geyn Maxymvs, to fleen out of Itaille.
- Maximus was  
ambitious to be  
sole ruler of  
the empire, and  
Bochas will tell  
how Fortune  
threw him  
down.
- ¶ This Maxymvs of pride gan desire 1828  
In his herte be fals ambicioun  
To regne allone, & of the hool empire  
In his handis to haue pocessioun.  
But in what wise Fortune threw hym down 1832  
With such othir, that be in nou[m]bre fyue,  
In this chapitle Bochas doth descryue.
- After Maximus  
had slain  
Gratian, Theo-  
dosius made  
war on him
- Ageyn this same tiraunt Maxymvs,  
Whan that he hadde slay[e]n Gracian, 1836  
The noble emperour Theodosius  
To venge his deth a werre in hast began,  
Because also that Valentynyan  
Was wrongli bashed thoruh the cruelte 1840  
Of Gracian ful ferr from his contre.
- and his general  
Andragathius  
who defended  
the Alps,
- With Maxymvs to holde up his partie  
Was Andragracian, a ful notable kniht,  
Which was maad prince of his cheualrie, 1844  
That took upon hym of verrey force & myht  
To keepe the mownteyns, that no maner wiht  
With Theodose, armyd in plate & maile, —  
No man sholde ouer the Alpies of Itaille. 1848
- and laying  
siege to  
Aquileia, took  
him prisoner  
and slew him.
- Theodose maad a gret arme,  
Be grace of God and marcial corage  
Leide a seege to Aigle, a gret cite,  
And wan the toun, maugre his visage; 1852  
Took the tiraunt, and for his gret outrage

1830. the hool empire] al thempire H. 1832. what] that R.  
1838. tavenge H — in hast a werre R — gan H.  
1841. from] out of H.  
1842. Maxymyan H — With] Whiche J.  
1843. Andragathius P. 1851. Aquile P — a gret] þe H.

Berafft hym first his roial garnement  
And slouh hym aftir be rihtful iugement.

Whan Andragracian knew that Maximus,  
That was his lord, was slay[e]n in swich wise,  
Anon for sorwe, the stori tellith thus,  
He drowned hymself, as Bochas doth deuise.  
Thus *can* Fortune make folk arise  
To thestat of *emperours* atteyne,  
With vnwar strok yiue hym a fal sodeyne.

1856 Andragathius  
drowned  
himself  
for sorrow.

1860

This Maximvs, of whom I spak tofor,  
Tofore his deth[e] made an ordynaunce,  
That his sone, which callid was Victor,\*  
Sholde aftir hym gouerne Gaule & Fraunce,  
Whom Arbogastes hadde in *gouernaunce* —  
A gret constable with Valentynyan —  
Slouh this Victor\* to regne whan he began.

1864

Before his  
death Maximus  
had ordered  
that his son  
Victor should  
govern Gaul,  
but Victor was  
slain by Ar-  
bogastes, one  
of Valentin-  
ian's generals.

1868

[A good processe how Theodosie with praier and  
smal noubre gat the victory.]<sup>1</sup>

**T**HAN Valentynyan with gret appaile  
Bi Arbogastes took pocioun  
Of Lumbardie & of al Itaile,  
Brouht al that lond to subieccioun.  
Than with his poweer he *cam* to Gaule doun,  
Ther resceyuyd with gret solempnite  
At Vyenne, a famous old cite.

1872

Valentinian  
then took pos-  
session of Lom-  
bardy and  
Italy, and  
entering Gaul  
was received  
with great  
pomp at  
Vienne.

1876

Arbogastes, of whom I spak now late,  
His cheef constable, as ye haue herd deuise,  
Of his lord[e] be ful cruel hate  
The deth conspired of fals couetise,  
Therbi supposyng that he shold arise  
Vnto thestat to be chose *emperour*,  
Whan he wer ded[e], lik a fals tretour.

1880

Arbogastes,  
hoping to be  
made emperor,  
conspired his  
death

Vp in a tour he heeng hym traitourli, [p. 387]  
[And] to mor sclandre & hyndryng of his name,  
Reportid outward and seide cursidli,  
This Arbogaste, to hide his owne shame, —  
His souereyn lord to putte in mor diffame, —

1884

and hung him  
up in a tower,  
reporting, to  
hide his guilt,  
that his lord  
had hanged  
himself.

1888

1856. Andragathius P. 1862. hym] hem R.  
1865, 69. Victor B. 1880. of] bi ful H. 1885. And] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 159 recto.

- Stefli affermed, a thyng that was ful fals,  
How he hymself[e] heng up bi the hals.
- Thus lik a moorderer and a fals tretour,  
And of condicioun hatful and odious,  
Laboured sore to be maad emperour,  
That he allone with Eugenivs  
Mihte exclude Theodosyus,  
First to lette hym, he sholde on no partie  
Passe thoruh Itaille nor thoruh Lumbardie.
- Sette espies to brynge hym in a treyne,  
Which that tyme, as thei vnderstood,  
Lik a iust prynce did his besy peyne,  
As he that thouhte nothyng but on good,  
In the hilles of Lumbardie abood,  
Whom Arbogast, of furious corage,  
Cast hym to trouble & stoppen his passage,
- He and Eugenivs beyng of assent  
Theodosie mortalli tassaile.  
Which whan he knew ther meenyng\* fraudulent,  
Al-be that he had but scars vitaille,  
On eueri cost besette with a bataille,  
And of his knihtis forsaken in maneere,  
He lefte all thyng & took hym to praier.
- With hym was left[e] but a smal meyne,  
Trew & feithful in ther affeccion.  
And first of alle he fill down on his kne  
And to *Iesus* gan make his orisoun:  
"O Lord," quod he, "thyn eres enclyne down,  
And of thi merciful gracious [hih] godnesse  
Delyuere me out of my mortal distresse.
- Considre & see how that I am thi kniht,  
Which ofte sithe thoruh my fragilite,  
With flessfli lustis bleendid in my siht,  
A thousand tymes haue trespasid onto the;  
But, gracious *Iesu*, of merci & pite  
To my requestis benigneli tak heed  
Me to socoure in this gret[e] need.

Thus a murderer and traitor, he sought to reign alone with Eugenius, and endeavouring to exclude Theodosius,

who was in the hills of Lombardy, attacked him there.

Theodosius, scantily provisioned, surrounded by his enemies and deserted by many of his knights, betook himself to prayer.

Falling down on his knee, he said, "O Lord, deliver me out of my distress.

"Consider that although blinded by fleshly lusts I am thy knight.

1901. As] And R — on] *om.* H, J, R 3, P.

1903. Whom] Whilome H.

1907. Which] *om.* R — meenyng] mouyng B. R. H 5.

1909. besette] sett H.

1920. ofte] off R. 1925. in] now in H.



- My trust is hool, pleynli to conclude,  
 Thou shalt foorthre & fortune my viage,  
 With litil folk ageyn gret multitude  
 To make me haue gracious passage,  
 Aftir the prouerbe of newe & old langage,  
 How that thou maist & kanst thi poweer shewe  
 Geyn multitude victorie with a fewe. 1928
- And as thou sauedest whilom Israel  
 Geyn Phar[ajos] myhti strong puissaunce,  
 And fro the leouns delyueredest Danyel,  
 And saueddest Susanne in hir mortal greuaunce,  
 Saue me this day fro sorwe & myschaunce,  
 In this myscheef to grante me this issu,  
 Tescape fro daunger be grace of the, Iesu! 1936
- Thi\* blissid name be interpretacioun  
 Is to seyne most myhti Saueour;  
 Ther is no dreed nor dubitacioun  
 That Iesus is in al worldli labour  
 To al that trust hym victorious protectour.  
 Now, blissid Iesu, pauys of my diffence,  
 Make me escape myn enmyes violence! 1940
- Lat myn enmyes, that so gret bost do blowe,  
 Thouh ther poweer be dreedful & terrible,  
 That thei may bexperience knowe  
 Ther is to the nothyng impossible, —  
 Thou too and thre & oon indiuysible,  
 Thouh I with me haue but fewe men,  
 Saue me, Iesu, this day fro deth; Amen." 1948
- ¶ The day gan cleere, the sunne gan shewe briht,  
 Whan Theodosie deuoutli lay knelyng,  
 And be grace adawen gan his siht  
 Fro cloudi wawes of long pitous weeping,  
 His souereyn hope set in the heuenli kyng,  
 Iesus his capteyn, in whos hooli name  
 That day escapid fro myscheef & shame. 1956
- The hooli crosse bete in his armure,  
 Born as cheef standard tofor[n] in his bataile;  
 God made hym strong[e] in the feeld tendure, 1960
- "My trust is that thou shalt further my enterprise and give victory to few against a multitude.
- "As thou saved Israel from Pharaoh, and Susannah in her extremity, save me to-day from this peril.
- "There is no doubt that thou art the victorious protector of all who trust in thee.
- "Let my powerful and boastful enemies know by experience that to thee nothing is impossible. Amen."
- Dawn found Theodosius still on his knees, almost blinded by weeping, his hope set on Jesus.
- The holy cross was borne as his chief standard, and God gave him victory.

1935. delyuerest R.

1937. &amp;] &amp; all H, R 3.

1940. Thi]This B, R, H 5.

1954. shewe] shyne R, J.

- Hardi as leoun\* his enmyes to assaile; 1964  
 Iesus his champioun, his plate & eek his maile, —  
 Iesus allone, set fix in his memorie,  
 Be whom that day he hadde the\* victorie.
- One of Arbogast's generals, Arbicio, deserted to the side of Theodosius, Ther was a kniht, prince of the cheualrie [p. 388] 1968  
 Of Arbogast and [of] Eugenivs,  
 Which gouerned al hool[i] ther partie,  
 Arbicio callid, manli and vertuous,  
 Which goodli cam to Theodosius, 1972  
 Did hym reuerence, & with riht glad cheer  
 Saued hym that day fro myscheef & daungeer.
- and a miraculous tempest of wind, hail and rain also befell to his advantage. Whan Theodosie upon his foon gan sette,  
 Lik a kniht nat turnyng his visage, 1976  
 And bothe batailes togidre whan thei mette,  
 Of Theodosie texpleite the passage  
 Fill a myracle to his auantage:  
 Be sodeyn tempest of wyndis, hail & reyn 1980  
 Troubled all tho that seged the mounteyn.
- Vulcan bent his guns of thunder and lightning, and Æolus awoke the winds in their caverns. Vlcanvs, which is cheef smyth of heuene,  
 Geyn Arbogastes gan hym reedi make  
 To beende his gunnys with thonder & with leuene, 1984  
 And Eolus his wyndis gan awake  
 Out of the[r] kauernys, hidous, broun & blake;  
 Alle of assent be sturdi violence  
 With Theodosius stooden at diffence 1988
- The enemy were scattered, their spears broken, their shields riven asunder. Eugenius was taken captive and beheaded; Arbogastes slew himself. Ageyn Eugenivs & Arbogast his brothir,  
 Ther peple and thei departed heer & yonder  
 With wynd and myst, that non of hem sauh oper,  
 Be vnwar vengauce of tempest & of thundir, 1992  
 Ther speres tobrak, ther sheeldes roff assonder.  
 Eugenivs take, aftir lost his hed,  
 [And] Arbogastes slouh hymself for dreed.

1964. leouns B, J.

1965. his] is R.

1967. the] that B.

1968. Ther] Her R — a prince H.

1969. Arbogastes P — 2nd of] om. R, J, R 3, H 5, P.

1970. hooli] hool R, J, H 5, whole P.

1977. bothe] om. R.

1978. texplete H.

1980. tempestes J, P — haile wynde &amp; reyn H.

1981. seged] passid H. 1986. ther] the H, J.

1987. Alle] And R.

1990. yonder] theer R.

1995. Arbogast P.

- Thus can the Lord of his eternal myht  
 Chastise tirauntis & ther malis repressé;  
 Saued Theodose, his owne chose kniht:  
 Who trustith hym of parfit stabilnesse,  
 Goth free fro daungeer, escapeth fro distresse. 1996 Thus the Lord  
 Bookis recorde how Theodosius can chastise  
 Was in his tyme callid Catholicus. 2000 tyrants and  
 save those who  
 trust in him.
- This myracle God list for hym werche,  
 Made hym victor for his gret meeknesse. 2004 God worked  
 this miracle  
 and made  
 Theodosius  
 victorious for  
 his great meek-  
 ness; and once  
 when he was  
 revengeful he  
 afterwards de-  
 voutly sub-  
 mitted himself  
 to the church.
- [Afforn and] afftir founde onto the cherche  
 As Cristis kniht; I take onto witnessse  
 His submyssioun & his deuout humblesse;  
 Of hastynesse whan he was vengable, 2008  
 He to the cherch[e] yald hymself coupable.
- The caas was this, as I reherse can:  
 In Thesalonica, a famous old cite,  
 Beyng bisshop Seynt Ambrose in Melan, 2012 Certain judges  
 Certeyn iuges\* for to doon equite were slain by  
 And sitte in doom hauyng auctorite, the commons;  
 Natwithstandyng ther commyssioun and the  
 Wer slayn be comouns entryng in the\* toun. 2016 emperor in his  
 anger
- Wherof\* themperour was nothyng\* glad nor fayn,  
 But comaunded of hasti wilfulnesse,  
 Whan he knew his iuges wer so slayn,  
 That his knihtis sholde hem thidir dresse, 2020  
 Entre\* the cite be cruel sturdynesse,  
 With suerd & pollex & daggeres sharpe whette,  
 Indifferentli slen al tho þat thei mette.
- Bi whos bidding the cite to encoumbre, 2024 Five thousand  
 That day was slayn many an innocent: were mur-  
 Fyue thousand ded remembrid in that noubre, dered, in-  
 Moordrid in hast withoute iugement cluding many  
 Bi them that wern vnto\* the cite sent. 2028 innocent.  
 But whan Ambrose herde of this cruel deede,  
 Lik a iust prelat thus he gan procede: St. Ambrose  
 heard of this  
 cruel deed,
- As ye haue herd[e] how this vengauce gan, and afterwards  
 Be Theodosie to chastise the cite, 2032 when he met  
 The same emperour cam aftir to Melan, Theodosius on  
 the porch of

2001. recordeth R. 2012. Milayn H. 2013. iuges] Iewes B.  
 2016. in the] into B, R, in to the J. 2017. Wherof] Therof  
 B, J — nothyng] nouthen B, H, nothir R 3, nouthyr H 5.  
 2021. Entre] Entred B, R, J. 2028. vnto] into B.

- the cathedral church at Milan, he forbade him to enter,      Wolde haue entrid at a solempnite  
The cathedral chersch in his most rialte;  
Bisshop Ambrose at the porche hym mette,      2036  
And of purpos manli hym withsette.
- saying, "I advise you to go away; you are a cruel homicide and shall not enter this church in spite of your power. You can remain outside for a while."      Quod the bisshop, "I counseil the withdrawe,  
Into this chersch thou shalt haue non entre.  
Thou hast offendid God and eek his lawe.      2040  
Be nat so hardi nor bold, I charge the,  
To sette thi foot nor entre in no degre;  
Because thou art a cruel homycide,  
Maugre thi myht thou shalt a while abide.      2044
- "Go home to your palace and don't let yourself be seen for eight months. God has disdain for all such murderers."      Vnto thi paleis hom ageyn retourne,  
This eihte monethes looke thou be nat seyn;  
Passe nat thi boundis, doo meekli ther soiourne:  
For, trust me weel and be riht weel certeyne,      2048  
Al suich moordrers God hath hem in disdeyne.  
Blood falsli shad, haue this in remembrance,  
Callith day and niht to hym to do vengeance.
- "During these eight months do not presume to enter the church,"      Ageyn[e]s the, for this gret offence [p. 389]      2052  
Of innocent blood shad ageyn[e]s riht,  
Be iust auctorite I yiue this sentence:  
This eihte monethes acountid day & niht  
To entre the chersch thou shalt nat come in siht,      2056  
Resoun shal holde so iustli the ballaunce  
Til thou haue fulli acomplissid thi penaunce.
- and take good heed of what I have said; for you'll get no more of me this time, and don't kill any more innocent people."      What I haue seid[e] tak [t]heerof good heede,  
For this tyme thou gest no mor of me.      2060  
Withdrawe thyn hand innocent blood to sheede  
For any rancour or hasti cruelte."  
That to behold the gret humylite  
Of themperour, considred euerideel,      2064  
It wolde haue perced an herte maad of steel.
- It would have pierced a heart of steel to see the emperor's humility; for bursting into tears and sobs he went home to his penance      With hed enclyned he spak no woord\* ageyn,  
Brast on weepyng with sobbyng vnstaunchable,  
His purpil weede bedewed as with reyn,      2068  
Returning hom with cheer most lamentable,  
So contynued in his purpos stable,  
With al the toknys of feithful repentaunce  
In lowli wise acomplissid his penaunce.      2072

2039. shal H.

2059. I haue] have I R.      2066. no woord he spak B.

2068. as] all R.      2071. the toknys] om. H.

- Gaf example to princis euerichon  
 In caas semblable, that werke of wilfulnesse  
 To execucioun for to procede anon,  
 Meynteene ther errour & froward cursidnesse, 2076  
 Diffende ther trespas, meynteene ther woodnesse,  
 Ferr out of ioynt, yif it shal be declarid,  
 To Theodosie for to be comparid.
- To the cherche he meekli did obeye, 2080  
 [Lik] Goddis kniht did lowli his penaunce,  
 Wher ther be summe that wrongli it werreye,  
 Holde therageyn be froward meyntenaunce.  
 Touchyng this mateer set heer in remembrance, 2084  
 As men disserue, — lat euery wiht tak heede —  
 He that seeth al quiteth hem ther meede.
- Theodosivs list nothyng abregge  
 To shorte the yerde of his correccioun; 2088  
 Forsook the platte, of rigour took the egge,  
 Meekli to suffre his castigacioun;  
 To bowe his chyne was no rebellioun,  
 Bi meek confessioun knowyng his trespas, 2092  
 Be Seynt Ambrose restored ageyn to grace.
- Vertuous princis may example take  
 Of Theodose, how thei the Lord shal queeme,  
 He nat froward amendis for to make, 2096  
 His sceptre, his suerd, his purple, his diadeeme  
 Soget to Ambrose, what hym list to deeme,  
 Obeied al thyng; & for his gret offence  
 To hooli cherch to make recompence. 2100
- He knew[e] that God was his souereyn Lord,  
 To hooli cherch how gretli he was bounde,  
 Gruchched neuer in thouht, will nor woord,  
 Hooli on Crist his empire for to founde. 2104  
 Wher vertu regneth, verfu wil ay rebounde;  
 And for this prince obeied tal vertu,  
 Hath now his guerdoun aboute with Crist Iesu.

with a most lamentable face. An example to princes, who out of perverse cursedness defend their trespasses.

He obeyed the church and meekly did his penance, in contrast to those who wrongly resist,

and, accepting his punishment to the full, was finally restored to grace.

Virtuous princes may take example of Theodosius, how they shall conciliate the Lord. He subjected himself to Ambrose

and holy church without complaint, and now has his reward with Christ above.

2078. Ferr] fore H, For R 3 — it] all H.  
 2081. Lik] om. R, J.  
 2082. it] om. H.  
 2087. nothyng] no while H.  
 2093. Be] om. H — restored] restorde hym H.  
 2099. his] this H.  
 2105. ay wil R.  
 2106. tal] to al H, callid R.  
 2107. his] om. H.

[How knightys and gentylnen chese Aleryk kyng /  
and comouns chese Radagasus whiche ended in  
myschef.]<sup>1</sup>

All peoples are  
descended from  
Noah and his  
three sons, as  
the Bible says.  
From Japhet  
came seven  
nations:

IT is remembrid of antiquite, 2108  
In the Bible, aftir Noes flood,  
How bi dissent[e] of his sonis thre,  
Of ther lynage pleynli and ther blood  
Al kynreedis dilatid been abrod; 2112  
And [in] myn auctour, as it is maad[e] mynde,  
Of Iaphet cam seuene naciouns, as I fynde.

Gaul, Galatia,  
the Goths,  
Italians, Tyre,  
Seythia and  
Thrace.

The peple first of Gaule & Galathe, 2116  
Of Magoth Gothes & folkis of Itaile,  
Tire, Sithia, with many gret contre  
Stondyng in Asia, as be rehersaile;  
But in Europe stant Trace, it is no faile.  
Gothes, Sithiens of purpos did ordeyne 2120  
Among hemsilff[e] gouernour[e]s tweyne:

In Thrace the  
Goths and  
Seythians had  
two gouernors,  
Alaric, chosen  
by the gentry,  
and Radagaisus,  
chosen by the  
commons.

Knihtis, gentilmen chose\* Alericus  
To be ther prince and haue the souereynte,  
Wher the comouns chose Radagasus. 2124  
The Gothes first, for grettest surete,  
With kyng Alerik been entred þe cite,  
Into Roome to fynde ther socour,  
That tyme Honorius beyng emperour. 2128

The emperor  
Honorius  
granted Alaric  
Gaul, Spain  
and France,  
but Stilicho  
was sent down  
against him  
afterwards,

Be graunt of whom, al the hool contre  
Youe to Alerik, of Gaule, Spaigne & France,  
Ther for tabide & holde ther his see,  
Gothes, Spay[g]nolffs vndir his obeissaunce, 2132  
Takyng on hym al the gouernaunce,  
Til Stillicon out of the occident  
To meete with them was down fro Roome sent,

and Alaric put  
him to flight.

That tyme Honorie beyng emperour. [p. 390] 2136  
Stillicon gan Allerik enchace  
With many a proud[e] sturdi soudeour,  
For to fihte thei chose haue ther place;

2122. chosen B — Alaricus R, P, R 3, Alaricas H.  
2124. Radagusus H. 2127. ther] their H.  
2130. Spayn Gaule & Fraunce H.  
2135. them] hym R.  
2139. place] space R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 160 recto.

- But Allerik stood so in the grace 2140  
 Of Fortune, that be verray myht  
 Stillicon he putte vnto the fliht.
- Radagasus and Alerik of assent  
 Haue concludid and ful accordid be 2144  
 Thoruh Itaille for to make her went  
 Toward Roome, and entre that cite,  
 Mauge Romeyns to haue the souereynte.  
 Tofor ther entring gan the toun manace, 2148  
 The name of Rome to chaungen & difface.
- For euermor the toun to doon a shame  
 Ther purpos was, as ye haue herd deuise;  
 First of alle to chaungen the touns name, 2152  
 Dempt themsilff hable to that emprise.  
 But Fortune thouhte al othirwise,  
 Lik hir maneeres to do most damage,  
 Whan she to men sheweth fresshest hir visage. 2156
- Hir condiciouns be nat alwey oon;  
 Stoundemeel of custum she can varie;  
 For she was first froward to Stillicon,  
 And to Radagasus eft ageyn contrarie: 2160  
 In o poynt, she list[e] neuer tarie,  
 To Radagasus hir fauour did faille,  
 Be Stillicon he venquissid in bataille.
- Al his pride myht nat make hym speede;  
 Fortune list[e] so for hym ordeyne,  
 That he was fayn, at so streiht a neede,  
 To flee for socour to an hih mounteyne,  
 Of al vitaille nakid & bareyne, 2168  
 Wher for hunger he felte so gret greef,  
 Nih al his peepel deide at\* myscheeff.
- Of al socour destitut and bareyn,  
 Sauh no remedie, took hym to be fliht; 2172  
 Be the Romeyns he was so ouerleyn,  
 Take at myscheeff, & maugre al his myht  
 In cheynis bounde & dampned anon riht  
 For to be ded; his peepel, as it is told, 2176  
 Many on slayn, summe take & summe wer sold.

Radagaisus  
 and Alaric  
 then decided  
 to conquer  
 Rome, and  
 threatened  
 to change  
 its name, to  
 the disgrace  
 of the  
 Romans.

They thought  
 themselves  
 able to do this;  
 but Fortune  
 thought  
 otherwise.

Although she  
 had been fro-  
 ward to Stili-  
 cho, she now,  
 favoured him.  
 Radagaisus  
 was defeated,

and fled to a  
 mountain,  
 where his  
 soldiers died  
 of hunger;

and finally he  
 was captured  
 and sentenced  
 to death.

2146. that] be H.

2149. chaungen] daunger R.

2161-63 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

2170. at] for B.

No one was more proud than king Radagaisus. His power did not last long.

Ther was no[n] prouder nor mor surquedous  
 In thilke dayes, pley[n]li to descryue,  
 Than was this said[e] kyng Radagasus, 2180  
 Which took on hym with Romeyns for to stryue.  
 His poweer short, was ouertourned blyue;  
 For Fortune of malys hadde a lust  
 To slen this tiraunt with hunger & with thrust. 2184

He was vain-glorious because people called him king of the Goths. His memory was soon forgotten.

Among[es] othir proud[e] princis alle  
 Reioysshed hymself bamaner [of] veynglorie,  
 Because that men in contres ded hym calle  
 Kyng of Gothes; short is the memorie 2188  
 Of hym rehersed or writyn in historie, —  
 To yiue exauple, in deede men may fynde  
 The name of tirauntes is soone put out of mynde.

[How Ruffyne chamberleyn with Theodosie vsurped to be Emperour and therefore by honoryus dampned & his heed smet of.]<sup>1</sup>

High climbing up by usurpation to imperial estate has often a sudden fall.

High clymbyng vp hap ofte an vnwar fall 2192  
 And specialli whan it is sodeyne,  
 Fro lowh degre testat imperiall,  
 Whan fals ambicioun the ladder doth ordeyne,  
 Be vsurpacioun presumptuousli tatteyne 2196  
 About the skies with his hed to perse;  
 Fro whens he cam wer shame to rehearse.

And this is especially true of those men whose beginnings are often a shame to rehearse—men who do not wish to know themselves, like Rufinus,

I meene as thus; al suich hasti clymbyng  
 Of them that list nat hemsilf for to knowe 2200  
 And haue forgete the ground of þer gynnyng,  
 Be froward fame with worldli wyndis blowe,  
 To reise ther name\* boue Sagittaries bowe, —  
 Record on Ruffyn\*, which proudli gan desire 2204  
 Be fals intrusioun to occupie thempire.

once an officer of Theodosius, who tried to become emperor by intrusion.

The which Ruffyn was whilom chaumbirleyn  
 With Theodosie, and holde a manli kniht;  
 Yit in o thyng he was foul ouerseyn, 2208

2180. kyng] *om.* R. 2181. took] *om.* R — on] vpon H.  
 2189. historie] memorie H. 2194. testat] to thestate H.  
 2197. skies] sterris R — with his hed] his hede with H, R 3.  
 2199. as] *om.* H. 2202. worldli] clowdy H.  
 2203. names B, J — about H.  
 2204. Ruffyn] Ruffia B, R, J — on] off R.  
 2206. whilome was H. 2207. and] was R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 160 verso.



- Be couetise bleendid in his siht  
 To spende his labour, & hadde no ground of riht.  
 Be themperour Honorius he was sent  
 For to gouerne al the orient. 2212
- Bi processe Ruffyn was maad vikeer,  
 Callid aftir vikeer Imperial,  
 Took upon hym hooli and enter  
 Be auctorite, [as] cheef and princepal, 2216  
 Hymself allone to gouernen al,  
 As most hable; thus he dede deeme,  
 Beforn all othir to were a diadeeme;
- Of hymself so moche he ded[e] make, [p. 391] 2220  
 In port and cheere [the] most ambitious.  
 At Constantynople vnwarli he was take,  
 First bounde in cheynys and aftir seruid thus:  
 Be trewe iugement of Honorivs, 2224  
 His hed smet of and his\* riht hand in deede;  
 This was his eende; of hym no mor I reede.

He was sent  
 by Honorius  
 to the East  
 and called  
 Vicar Imperial.  
 Afterwards  
 he seized  
 the whole  
 empire

and made  
 much of him-  
 self; but he  
 was taken in  
 Constantinople  
 and bound in  
 chains, and his  
 head and right  
 hand were cut  
 off.

[How Stillicon and othir of lik condicion ended in  
 myscheff.]<sup>1</sup>

- A FFTIR whos deth to Bochas ther cam oon,  
 Swich another lik of condicioun, 2228  
 Afforn remembrid, callid Stellicon,  
 Whos sone Euterius, as maad is mencion,  
 Purposed hym to haue pocessioun  
 Of thempire hool; pley[n]li thus he thouthte, 2232  
 And bi what mene the weie his fadir souhte.
- Compendiousli to tellyn of thes tueyne,  
 Fro dyuers contres toward Septemptrioun  
 To gadre peple, thei dide her besi peyne, 2236  
 Of many dyuers straunge nacioun.  
 Ageyn Honorivs thei cam togidre doun,  
 [And] as thei mette, Fortune made hem faille,  
 Bothe attonys slay[e]n in bataille. 2240

Stilicho next  
 appeared to  
 Bochas. His  
 son Eucherius  
 proposed that  
 they should  
 take possession  
 of the Empire;

so they  
 collected an  
 army of  
 various  
 peoples  
 and were  
 defeated and  
 slain by  
 Honorius.

2209. Be] to H.

2223. aftir] aftirward R.

2225. hed] he R — his] in his B.

2230. Eucherius P.

2239. And as] All R, and H, R 3 — made] dyd R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 160 verso.

Their evil beginning had an evil end. Constans and his father Constantine also took upon themselves to usurp power in the Empire.

Ther gynnyng cursid hadde a wengable fyn;  
Aftir whos deth I reede of othir tweyne:  
¶ Of oon Constans, his fadir Constantyn,  
Which Constantyn took on hym in certeyne 2244  
To regne in Gaule, and aftir that ordeyne,  
In that contre to be *gouvernour*,  
Ther to contynve as lord and emperour.

Constans turned monk, but his father had him taken out and made a knight.

His sone Constans kaute a deuocioun 2248  
Of conscience, and forthwith anon riht  
Was shaue a monk, & made his professioun.  
His fadir aftir of verray force & myht  
Leet take hym out, gaf hym the ordre of kniht; 2252  
Both of assent gan make hemsiluen strong  
Toppresse the contre & do the peple wrong.

Both of them then oppressed the people, and, joining together with one Gerontius,

This said[e] Constans, as myn auctour seith,  
Was confederat, of hatful cruelte, 2256  
With oon Herencivs, assuraunce maad & feith,  
As brethre suorn for mor auctorite.  
And for to make the noubre up of thre,  
Constantyn was sworn with hem also 2260  
To been al oon in what thei hadde ado.

conquered many cities in Spain. Gerontius traitorously slew Constans,

Thes said[e] thre sworn and Ioyned thus,  
Conquered in Spaigne many gret cite;  
But in this while this seid Herencivs, 2264  
Traitour and fals, ful of duplicite,  
His fellawe slouh ageyn his oth, parde.  
Thus was Constans thoruh fals collusioun  
Of Herencivs moordred be tresoun. 2268

and shortly afterwards he himself was killed by his own soldiers. As a rule men receive their just reward.

Herencivs aftir lyued but a while;  
Be his owne knihtis he slay[e]n was also.  
Fraude for fraude; deceit is quit *with* gile;  
It folweth euer & gladli cometh therto: 2272  
Men resceyue ther guerdouns as thei doo.  
Lat men alwey haue this in remembraunce,  
Moordre of custum wil eende with myschaunce.

Among others who ended in mischief were Attalus and Heraclian,

¶ Among suich othir, thus ending in myscheef, 2276  
Cam Attalus and oon Eraclyan;  
For no prowesse, but to ther gret repreeff

2241. Ther] The R. 2250. &] om. H, R 3.

2257. Herencius] Heroncyus H, R 3, henricius J, Gerontius P.

2261. ado] to do R. 2262. Ioyned R, H. 2264, 68. Gerontius P.

2275. wil eende] eendith H. 2277. and] an R.

- Remembrid heer; ther stori telle can,  
Ageyn Romeyns whan thei rebell[e] gan,  
Be Honorivs afforn maad officerees  
And of thempire callid cheef vikeres. 2280
- First Attalus for his tirannye,  
Whan he in Gaule was maad [a] *gouvernour*,  
Went into Spaigne with a gret companye,  
Did his peyne and fraudulent labour  
Be fals sleihte to be maad emperour. 2284  
Take and bounde, exilid for falsnesse,  
His hand smet of, eendid in wrechidnesse. 2288
- O**FF Eraclyan the ende was almost lik,  
Yit was he promot to gret prosperite,  
Maad *gouvernour* & lord of [al] Affrik,  
Of consuleer roos to the dignite, 2292  
Rood thoruh Libie and many gret contre,  
With thre thousand shippes gan to saille  
And with seuene hundrid taryue [vp] in Itaille. 2296
- Swich noubre of shippis neuer afforn was\* seyn,  
Lik as it is acountid be writyng;  
His naue passed the naue in certeyne  
Of myhti Xerses, that was of Perse kyng, 2300  
Or Alisaundre; but yit in his comyng,  
Toward Itaille whan he sholde aryve,  
The se and Fortune gan ageyn hym stryve.
- At his arryuaile he hadde a sodeyn dreed, [p. 392] 2304  
Cause Honorius had sent down a capteyn,  
Constancivs callid, *gouvernour* and hed  
Of al the Romeyns, to meete hym on the pleyyn;  
For which Eraclyan *tournid* is ageyn, 2308  
As I fynde, gan take his passage  
Toward the cite that callid is Cartage.
- Thus Fortune list hir power shewe:  
Or he cam fulli to that noble toun, 2312  
With sharp[e] suerdis he was al to-hewe  
Among his knihtis thoruh fals occasioun\*  
As thei fill at a discencioun.

who rebelled  
against  
Honorius.

Attalus tried  
to be made  
emperor in  
Spain and was  
exiled and his  
hand cut off.

Heraclian,  
governor of  
Africa, became  
a consul and  
attempted to  
invade Italy  
with 3700  
ships.

His navy  
was larger  
than that of  
mighty Xerxes  
or Alexander.

When he  
arrived, he  
lost courage  
because Hono-  
rius had  
sent down  
Constantius  
to give him  
battle, and  
sailed for  
Carthage,

where he was  
cut to pieces  
by his knights.

2292. al] *om.* R.

2297. was] *wer* B, *were* J.

2312. noble] *om.* R. 2314. occasioun] *collusioun* B

2315. at] *as* R — a] *om.* H.

Of intrusioun began first this quarell, 2316  
Ageyn Romeyns whan that he gan rebell.

¶ **Bochas rehersith here be vhom Rome cam to nouzte.**<sup>1</sup>

Almost every  
prince whose  
story Bochas  
told in his  
Eighth Book  
ended in  
wretchedness.

**O**FF many myscheuys heer afforn rehersid,  
Summe drawe along & summe shortli told,  
And hou Fortune hath hir wheel reuersid, 2320  
Be tragedies remembrid manyfold  
Toform be Bochas, of princis yong & old,  
In the eihte\* book rehersid the processe,  
Echon almost eendid in wrechidnesse. 2324

especially those  
who tried to  
become em-  
peror without  
just title. Yet  
the estate of  
emperor has  
gone to ruin,

Namli all tho that dide most desire  
Be wrong title themsilff to magnefie,  
To haue lordshipe & gouerne the empire,  
Thestat imperial proudli to occupie. 2328  
Which estat, pley<sup>n</sup>li to specefie,  
As ferr as Pheebus doth in his speere shyne  
Among al lordshipe is drawe onto ruyne.

and Rome came  
to nought, as  
John Bochas  
rehearses.

Fro myn auctour me list[e] nat discorde 2332  
To telle the ground whi Roome is com\* to nouht;  
Be an exauple I cast me to recorde  
What was cheef cause, yiff it be weel souht,\*  
Be a stori that cam onto the thouht 2336  
Of Iohn Bochas, which, as ye shal lere,  
Ful notabli is rehersed heer.

It happened in  
the time of  
Odoacer, a  
king and a  
great governor,  
yet a ravenous  
robber,

Which exauple and stori rehersyng,  
Ceriousli folwyng myn auctour, 2340  
Odoacer, whilom a famous kyng,—  
A kyng be name & a gret gouernour,  
But of his lyuyng a rauynous robbour,  
Out of whos court wer merci & pite 2344  
Banshed for euere with trouthe & equite.

2316. this] the R.

2319. along] long R.

2323. eihte] seuent R, vijte H 5, viijte B.

2331. lordshippis R. 2333. is com] cam B, J.

2335. out souht B, J. 2336. the] his H.

2337. Of] bi H. 2339. and] in H.

2340. folwen H.

<sup>1</sup> The following chapter-heading is in MS. J. leaf 161 recto: "A good processe why Rome was destroyed / and for the same or like cause many other Rewmes."

- In that regioun wher *merci* is nat vsid,  
 And trouthe oppressid is with *tirannye*,  
 And rihtwisnesse be poweer is refusid, 2348  
 Fals extorsioun supporteth robbery,  
 And sensualite can haue the maistrie  
 Aboff resoun, be toknes at a preeff,  
 Which many a lond haue brouht onto myscheeff. 2352
- Ther is no rewme may stonde in surete,  
 Ferme nor stable in verrey existence,  
 Nor contune in long prosperite,  
 But yif the throne of kyngli excellence 2356  
 Be supportid with iustise and clemence  
 In hym that shal as egal iuge stonde  
 Tween riche & poore, with sceptre & suerd\* in honde.
- A cleer exauple, this mateer for to grounde, — 2360  
 So as a fadir that is naturall,  
 Or lik a moodir which kynd[e]li is bounde  
 To fostre ther childre in epsecial,  
 Riht so a kyng in his estat roiall 2364  
 Sholde of his offis dilligentli entende  
 His trewe leeges to cherisse [hem] & diffende.
- Be good exauple his sogettis tenlumyne;  
 For temporal rewmys sholde, as in figure, 2368  
 Resemble the kyngdam which [that] is dyuyne,  
 Be lawe of God & lawe eek of nature,  
 That *res publica* long tyme may endure,  
 Void of discord and fals duplicite, 2372  
 As\* o bodi in long prosperite.
- Nouther ther regne nor domynacioun  
 Haue of themsilff non other assuraunce;  
 Thestat of kynges gan be permyssioun 2376  
 Of Goddis grace & of his purueyaunce,  
 Be vertuous lyff and moral gouernaunce,  
 Long to contune bothe in pes and werre  
 Lik her desertis, & punshe hem whan thei erre. 2380
- Thei sholde be the merour and the liht, [p. 393]  
 Transcende al othir be vertuous excellence,  
 As examplaires of equite and riht,

without mercy  
 or pity.  
 Many a land  
 has been  
 brought to  
 ruin when  
 sensuality has  
 the mastery  
 of reason.

No realm  
 can stand  
 secure unless  
 the throne  
 is supported  
 by clemency  
 and justice.

Just as fathers  
 and mothers  
 are bound  
 to foster their  
 children, so  
 should kings  
 cherish and  
 defend their  
 subjects,

giving  
 them a good  
 example; and  
 temporal  
 kingdoms  
 ought to  
 resemble  
 the kingdom  
 that is divine.

There is no  
 other assurance  
 for them; in-  
 asmuch as the  
 estate of kings  
 began by the  
 permission of  
 God; and God  
 will treat  
 them as they  
 deserve.

Kings should  
 excel all other  
 men in virtue  
 and discretion;

2346. nat] na H. 2348. be] with H.  
 2359. suerd & sceptre B, J. 2363. special H.  
 2366. hem] om. J, P, H 5. 2369. that] om. R.  
 2373. As] Of B, J. 2374. nor] no H.

- So be discrecioun of natural prouidence 2384  
 To tempre ther rigour with merci & clemence;  
 What shal falle afforn[e] caste al thynges,  
 As appartene[n]th to princis & to kynges.
- they must remember the past and prepare for things to come and resist vices. Thynges passed to haue in remembrance, 2388  
 Conserue wisli thynges in presence,  
 For thynges to come afforn mak ordenaunce,  
 Folwe the trais of vertuous contynence,  
 Ageyn all vices to make resistence 2392  
 Be the vertu of magnanymyte,  
 Which is approprid to imperial mageste,
- They should be stable in joy and adversity. Brothir to force, auctours seyn echon,  
 Which conserueth the roial dignite 2396  
 In such a mene stable as eny ston, —  
 Nat ouer glad for no prosperite,  
 Nor ouer sad for non aduersite;  
 For lyff nor deth his\* corage nat\* remewe 2400  
 To God and man to yeld hem that is dewe.
- arm themselves against fleshly lusts and exclude all slanderous people, flatterers and ribalds from their palaces. Geyn flesshli lustis arme hym in sobirnesse,  
 Voide al surfetis of froward glotonye,  
 Gredi appetites be mesure to represses, 2404  
 Out of his hous auoide al ribaudie,  
 Rowners, flaterers and such folk as kan lie,  
 War in his doomys he be nat parciall,  
 To poore doon almesse, to vertuous liberall. 2408
- In their dress they should shew themselves kings; but virtuous living deserves more praise than clothing. In his array shewe hym lik a kyng  
 From other princis bamaner difference,\*  
 So that men preise his vertuous lyuyng  
 Mor than his clothing, ferr from his presence; 2412  
 And let hym thynken in his aduertence,  
 Truste theron, verrailly certeyn,  
 As he governeth men wil reporte & seyn.
- For companions let them have notable, experienced princes, who know the difference between good and evil; Lat hym also for his gret avail 2416  
 Haue such aboute hym to be in presence,  
 Notable princis to be of counsail,  
 Swich as toforn haue had experience  
 Tuen good and euel to knowe the difference. 2420

2385. with merci] *om.* H. 2392. to] an H, *om.* R 3.

2394. to] to be H. 2400. his] my B — nat] to B.

2403. of] and R. 2405. hous] thouht H, R 3.

2410. difference] apparence B, J. 2411. that] *om.* R.

2414. verrailly] verrey H.

And sixe thynges, hatful of newe & old,  
To banshe hem out in hast from his houshold.

¶ First them that loue to lyue *in idilnesse*,  
As such as nouthur loue God nor dreede, 2424 and they must  
Coueitous peple that poore folk oppresse,  
And them also that doon al thyng for meede,  
And symulacioun, clad in a double weede,  
And suich as can for ther auauntages 2428  
Out of oon hood[e] shewe too visages.

Lat hym also uoid out at his gate  
Riotous peple that loue to wachche al niht,  
And them also that vse to drynke late, 2432 riotous, with  
Ly longe abedde til ther dyner be diht,  
And such as list nat of God to haue a siht,  
And rekles folk that list nat heere masse,  
Tauoide his court, & let hem lihtli passe. 2436 about them  
reckless people  
who do not go  
to mass.

For suich defaultis, rehersed heer tofor, 2440 Not only  
Nat onli Roome, but many gret contre  
Hath be destroyed & many kyndam lorn,  
In olde cronicles as ye may reed & see.  
Fals ambicioun, froward duplicite  
Hath many a rewme & many a lond encloied,  
And been in cause whi thei haue be destroyed.

Iherusalem was whilom transmygrat, 2444 Jerusalem be-  
Ther trewe prophetis for thei hadde *in despiht*;  
And Baltazar was eek infortunat,  
For he in Babiloun folwed al his deliht. 2448 cause the Jews  
scorned their  
true prophets;  
Belshazzar for  
his luxury in  
Babylon;  
Darius was  
suddenly slain,  
and Alexander  
poisoned.

Discord in Troye groundid on couetise,  
Whan be fals tresoun sold was Palladioun; 2452 Troy was lost  
by covetous-  
ness;  
Rome and  
Carthage were  
destroyed by  
civil strife,  
such as fell  
but late in  
France.

Roome and Cartage in the same wise  
Destroyed wern, for short conclusioun,  
Among hemsilff for ther dyuisioun.  
Rekne othir rewmys that been of latter date, 2456  
As of dyuisiouns in France that fill but late.

2424. nouthur] nouthis R. 2427. a] om. R.  
2428, 29. avauntage, visage H. 2430. uoid] avoid H.  
2439. many a H. 2442. both a's om. H, 2nd a om. R.  
2443. been in cause] be the cause R.  
2450. he] that he B, H, R. 2452. sold] slayn H.  
2457. of] in H — in] of H.

- The chief fault has been in the ruling princes; and I shall tell as an example the story of Odoacer.
- Al thes defautis rehersid heer breeffli,  
 Outsouht the roote & weied in balaunce,  
 Cheeff occasioun, to telle bi and bi, 2460  
 Hath been in princis that haue had *gouernaunce*.  
 And speciali to putte in remembraunce,  
 For an example telle as kometh to mynde  
 Of Odoacer the stori, as I fynde. 2464
- He was born in Pannonia, and as he had no ancestry he began a conquest of theft and robbery.
- Born in Prevs and hardi of corage, [p. 394]  
 At his begynnyng hymself to magnefie,  
 Thoug no mencionioun be maad of [his] lynage,  
 Hauyng no title of blood nor auncetrie,\* 2468  
 His conquest gan of theffte and robberye,\*  
 Gadred peepel of sondri regiouns,  
 Entred Itaille with many naciouns.
- He invaded Hungary and defeated Orestes, who fled to Pavia
- With his soudiours first he gan assaille, 2472  
 With multitude entryng anon riht,  
 Kyndames of Hungry & contres of Itaille;  
 Mette in his passage with a Romeyn kniht  
 Callid Horestes, in steel armyd briht: 2476  
 The feeld was take and put in iupartie;  
 Horestes fledde for socour to Pauye.
- and was there taken prisoner and afterwards slain.
- Streihthli beseged and the toun Iwonne,  
 Fond for the tyme non othir cheuisaunce, 2480  
 The nexte morwe at risyng of the sunne,  
 Bounde in cheynis tencres of his greuaunce,  
 Sent to a cite that callid was Plesaunce,  
 Ageyn[e]s whom Odoacer was so fell, 2484  
 Leet hym be slayn be iugement ful cruel.
- Odoacer then marched on Rome and was crowned king of Italy.
- Aftir whos deth, be sodeyn violence  
 Odoacer is passid thoruh Itaille,  
 Entred Roome, fond no resistance; 2488  
 For ther was non to yiue hym bataille.  
 Zeno themperour durste hym nat assaille,  
 So that be force and rauynous werkyng  
 Of al Itaille he was crownid kyng. 2492

2461. Hath] Have H.

2467. his] *om.* R.

2468. of blood nor auncetrie] but theffte and robberye B, J.

2469. gan of theffte and robberye] gannat of blood nor auncetrie B, gan nought of blood and auncetrie J.

2474. Kyngdam H, R 3, Kyngdom P. 2478. to] *in* to H.2482. in] *witb* H.

2490. durste] did H.

2491. rauynour R.



- Hadde al Roome vndir subieccioun,  
 Fortune a while list [hym] nat [to] faille,  
 Zeno therof hadde indignacioun,  
 Gan werke ageyn hym, in hope it sholde [a]uaile.<sup>2496</sup>  
 And therupon the lordship of Itaille  
 He gaf of purpos, his power committynge,  
 To Theodorik, that was of Gothes kyng.
- So that Theodorik in hope to haue victorie,  
 Ageyn Odoacer gan make resistence; 2500  
 And his name to putte[n] in memorie,  
 Took vpon hym be knihtli excellence  
 For the Romeyns to stonde[n] in diffence. 2504  
 Mette hym proudli with his cheualrie  
 Beside a ryueer that callid was Sowcye.
- With ther batailles togidre whan thei mette,  
 Beside Leglere that stant in Lumbardie, 2508  
 With round[e] speres & sharp swerdis\* whette,  
 Odoacer, for al his tyrannye,  
 Was put to fliht, discournted his partie.  
 And Fortune than, [which] can best chaunge & varie,  
 At vnset hour was to hym contrarie. 2513
- Hym & his power the Romeyns haue defied;  
 He brente her vynes and tour[e]s environn,  
 Because the entre was to hym denyed, 2516  
 And to Rauenne he is descendid down.  
 But maugre hym he was take in that\* toun  
 Be Theodorik; lat ech tiraunt tak heed,  
 Odoacer comaundid to be ded. 2520
- ¶ Myn auctour Bochas of entencioun,  
 For the tyme, as kam to remembraunce,  
 Toward Romeyns maketh a digressioun,  
 To them recordynge the gret[e] variaunce, 2524  
 The vnwar chaunges, the gery contenaunce  
 Of Fortunis fals transmutacioun,  
 Thes same woordis rehersyng to the toun.

The Emperor  
 Zeno resigned  
 his power to  
 Theodorik the  
 Goth,

who attacked  
 Odoacer on the  
 Sontius

in Lombardy  
 and defeated  
 him.

Retreating  
 through Italy,  
 Odoacer laid  
 waste the land,  
 but was finally  
 captured in  
 Ravenna and  
 (let every  
 tyrant take  
 heed)  
 beheaded.

My author  
 now makes a  
 digression,  
 recording the  
 many vicissi-  
 tudes of  
 Rome.

2494. hym] *om.* J — list hym nat to faille] was to hym favour-  
 able H, R 3 — to] *om.* R, J.

2497. the] ther R. 2501. Ageyn] Geyn R.

2504. in] at H. 2508. legle H.

2509. swerdis] speres B. 2512. which] *om.* R.

2515. toures] touns R.

2518. that] the B, J.

2519. tiraunt] man H.

2525. guery R, H.

¶ The wordes\* of Bochas a-geyne Rome.<sup>1</sup>

Rome, remember the days of your greatness. You once shone like a sun through the world; now all is turned to ruin.

**R**EMEMBRE o Roome & calle ageyn to mynde 2528  
 The daies passid of thi felicite,  
 Pi\* marcial conquest, þi triumphes left behynde,  
 Thi grete victories most of auctorite,  
 Thi famous laudes songe in ech contre, 2532  
 Which like a sonne\* thoruh al þe world did shyne,  
 Now al attonis is turnid to ruyne!

Your lordship extended from east to west; but the golden letters of your name are now darkened and defaced.

From est to west thi lordship did atteyne,  
 About al poweers most excellent & roiall; 2536  
 But now fro Roome doun into Almayne  
 Thestat translatid which is imperial;  
 Name of thi senatours, name in especial,  
 The golden lettres dirkid & diffacid, 2540  
 And from remembrance almost out araced.

City of cities, to which the Alps and all the mountains of Lombardy were once subject

Cite of cites, whilom most glorious, [p. 395]  
 And most fresshli flouryng in cheualrie,  
 To which the Alpies & mounteyns most famous 2544  
 Wer lowli soget of al Lumbardie,  
 Til that discord, dyuisioun and envie  
 Among yoursilf hath clipped the brihtnesse,  
 Bi a fals serpent brouht in bi doubilnesse. 2548

and kings and princes tributary, you were brought to nought when divided against yourself.

Kynges, princis wer to the tributarye,  
 Of al prosperite so fulsum was the flood,  
 Among yoursilf til ye began to varie, 2552  
 The world[e] thoruhout soget to you stood,  
 Til ye gan shewe too facis in o hood:  
 What folwed aftir, Fortune hath so prouided,  
 Ye cam to nouht whan ye gan be deuyded.

Lacking in prudent senators, in knighthood and soldiers, the community stood desolate;

Vnpurueied of prudent senatours, 2556  
 Thi marchaundise turnid to pouerte,  
 Of knihthod bareyn, nakid of soudiours,  
 Disconsolat stant al thi comounte,  
 Tour[e]s, wallis broke of thi cite, 2560

2530. Pi] Pat B, þe H.

2533. a sonne] be report B, R, H 5 (whiche thurgh all the world by report did shyne J).

2537. into] in R. 2541. out racid R.

2542. most whilom R.

2549. to] om. R. 2553. o] oon H.

<sup>1</sup> wordes] workis B.

That whilom wer a paradis of deliht, —  
Now al the world hath the but *in* despiht.

and now all the  
world has you  
in contempt.

Cause, to conclud, of al thi wrechidnesse,—  
Fals ambicioun, pride and lecherie, 2564  
Dyuysioun, malicious doubilnesse,  
Rancour, hatreed, couetise [&] envie,\*  
Which set aside al good[e] policie;  
In breek rehersed, for short conclusioun, 2568  
Haue be cheeff ground of thi destruccioun.

Your  
wretchedness  
arose from  
false ambition,  
pride, lechery,  
division,  
deceit, anger,  
hatred,  
covetousness  
and envy.

[How the kynges Trabstila and Busarus were brouht  
to subieccioun and made tributaryes to Theo-  
deryk.]<sup>1</sup>

AFFTIR thes myscheuys told of Rome toun,  
Cam Trabstila kyng of Gepidois  
With other tweyne, as maad is mencion: 2572  
Busar that was kyng of Bulgarois,  
With Pheletevs, regnyng in Ragois.  
Alle thes thre, breeffli for to seyne,\*  
Cam attonys to Bochas to compleyne, 2576  
Ther rewmys stondyng toward Septemtrioun.  
And to remembre of the firste tweyne,  
Wer brouht attonis to subieccioun  
Bi Theodorik, that did his besi peyne 2580  
Them to conquere, & proudli did ordeyne  
That thei wer neuer hardi to rebell  
Ageyn\* Romeyns nor take no quarell.  
To Theodorik thei wer maad tributarye, 2584  
Most wrechchidli bounde[n] in seruage,  
Neuer so hardi aftir for to varie  
In peyne of deth duryng al ther age.  
Of seruitute, loo, heer the surplusage,— 2588  
Of all wrechchis most wrechchid thei be founde,  
Thei that to thraldam constreyned been & bounde.

After these  
calamities  
told of Rome,  
Trasilla,  
king of the  
Gepidae,  
Busar, king  
of the Bulgars,  
and Philete,  
king of the  
Rugii, all of  
whom reigned  
in the north,  
came com-  
plaining to  
Bochas.

The first two  
were con-  
quered by  
Theodoric

and bound  
wretchedly  
in servage.

2566. *is transposed after 2568 in B, but correction indicated.*

2569. be] the R. 2571. Trasilla P.

2573. Busa P, Busarus J.

2574. Pheteus H, Philitheus P, J — Rugiois P.

2575. seyne] feyne B.

2583. Ageyns B.

2590. Thei that] That thei R — that] to þat H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

Virtuous freedom is the greatest of treasures, transcending all riches found in earth.

Tresour of tresours, yif it be weel souht,  
Is vertuous fredam with large liberte; 2592  
With worldli goodis it may nat be bouht,  
With roial rubies, gold, stonis nor perre;  
For it transcendith and hath the souereynthe  
Aboue al richessis that been in erthe founde, 2596  
A man at large freeli to stonde vnbounde.

[How Philitee lost his kyngdom.] <sup>1</sup>

The third king, Philete, lost his kyngdom and his life when attacked by Odoacer.

¶ Next thes too kynges, in ordre as ye may see,  
To Iohn Bochas gan shewe his presence 2600  
The thridde kyng, callid Phelete,  
Which bi Fortunys sodeyn violence  
Loste his kyngdam, and be cruel sentence  
Of Odoacer, the tiraunt merciles,  
Loste his liff and cam no mor in pres. 2604

The Emperor Marcian was murdered by his soldiers;

Thes sodeyn chaunges to reede whan I gan,  
Sauh so ofte the wheel turne up & down  
¶ Of Fortune; ther cam oon Marcian,  
Of whom is maad non othir mencion, 2608  
Sauf be a sodeyn coniuraceoun  
He moordred was, [he] beyng innocent,  
Among his knihtis, which slouh hym of assent.

and young Leo, who justly succeeded his father of the same name,

¶ Than tofor Bochas to shewe[n] his presence 2612  
Ther cam oon that callid was Leoun,  
Which kauht a title be no violence,  
But made his cley[m] be iust successioun  
Afftir his fadir, and took pcessioun, 2616  
Which of a Leoun, myn auctour seith the same,  
Beyng emperour, bar the same name.

was tyrannously put out of his realm by Zeno and forced to become a monk.

This yonger Leoun, ageyn al trouthe & riht,  
Be tirannye, as maad is mencion, 2620  
Thoruh cruel Zeno, that was an hardi kniht,  
Was put out of his pcessioun,  
Constreyned to lyue in religioun;  
But to what ordre that he did[e] weende, 2624  
I fynde nat; but ther he made an eende.

2591. of] o H.

2600. Philite P.

2605. begane H.

2609. a] om. R.

2604. and] om. H.

2606. often H — vp so doun H, J.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

[How Symak and Boys his son in lawe were banys-  
shed and aftir Iuged to die.]<sup>1</sup>

<p><b>A</b>FFTIR thes myscheuys Symak gan [p. 396] hym drawe Toward Bochas <i>with</i> a ful pitous face; Bois <i>cam with</i> hym, that was his sone in lawe, Which among Romeyns gretli stood <i>in</i> grace. But in this mateer breefli for[th] to pace, The said[e] Bois, only for his trouthe Exilid was; alas, it was gret routhe!</p>	<p>2628</p> <p>2632</p>	<p>Symmachus and his son-in-law Boetius were great favour- ites in Rome; and Boetius was exiled for his upright- ness.</p>
<p>For comoun proffit he was onto the toun In mateeres that groundid wer on riht Verray protectour and stedfast champioun Ageyn too tirauntis, which of force &amp; myht Hadde in the poraille oppressid many a wiht Be exacciouns and pillages gunne of newe Vpon the comouns, ful fals &amp; riht vntrewe.</p>	<p>2636</p>	<p>He was protector and champion of the city against two tyrants,</p>
<p>Whan* Theodorik, of Gothes lord &amp; kyng, Took upon hym be fals intrusioun To regne in Roome, the peple oppressyng Bi his too prouostis, as maad is mencioune, — Did in the cite gret oppressioun, Confederat as brothir onto brothir: Coniugast, and Trigwill was the tothir.</p>	<p>2640</p> <p>2644</p>	<p>Conigastus and Trigguilla, provosts of Theodoric;</p>
<p>Compendiousli this mateer to declare, To saue the comoun Bois stood <i>in</i> diffence; For lyff nor deth he list nat for to spare To withstonde of tirauntes the sentence. Kyng Theodorik of cruel violence Banshed hym bi hatful tyrannye, He and his fadir tabide in Pauye.</p>	<p>2648</p> <p>2652</p>	<p>but his struggle against them brought him into disfavour with Theodoric, who banished him and his father to Pavia.</p>
<p>Aftirward Theodorik of hatreede, Lik a fals tiraunt, of malis &amp; envie Yaf iugement that bothe too wer dede. Bot touchyng Boys, as bookis specefie, Wrot dyuers bookis of philosophie, Of the Trynite mateeres þat wer dyuyne, Martird for Crist &amp; callid Seueryne.</p>	<p>2656</p> <p>2660</p>	<p>Afterwards they were both con- demned to death.</p>

2626. Simachus P.      2628. Boetius P.  
2639. riht] eke R.      2640. Whan] Than B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

[Off kyng Arthure and his conquestes / of the  
commoditees of Englund / and he was destroyed  
by his Cosyn Mordrede.]<sup>1</sup>

Was there ever  
a prince who  
could make  
himself secure  
in Fortune's  
grace?

WAS euer prince [that] mihte hymself assure  
Of Fortune the fauour to restreyne? —

Lik his desir hir grace to recure  
Tabide stable & stonde[n] at certeyne? 2664  
Among alle rekne Arthour of Breteyne,  
Which in his tyme was holde of euery wiht  
The wisest prince and the beste kniht.

Arthur of  
Britain was in  
his time held to  
be the wisest  
prince and best  
knight; and  
Bochas tells  
his story in  
this chapter.

To whom Bochas gan his stile dresse, 2668  
In this chapitle to remembre blyue  
His grete conquest & his hih noblesse,  
With synguler deedis that he wrouchte his lyue.  
And first he gynneth breefli to descryue 2672  
The siht of Breteyne & of that contre,  
Which is enclosed with a large se,

Britain is sur-  
rounded by a  
large sea and  
lies far to the  
west, north of  
Spain and near  
France. It has  
many rivers,  
hot baths and  
divers minerals,

Set ferr westward, as ye shal vndirstond,  
Hauyng Spaigne\* set in the opposit, 2676  
Of a smal angle callid Ing[e]lond,  
Fraunce aboute hym, descryuyng thus his siht, —  
With many a ryueer plesaunt of deliht,  
Hote bathes [&] wellis ther be founde, 2680  
Dyuers myneres, of metallis ful habounde.

and is abund-  
ant in food.  
London has  
ships, Win-  
chester wine,  
Worcester  
fruits, Hertford  
cattle, and the  
Cotswolds wool.

Aboute which renneth the occian,  
Riht plenteuous of al maner vitaille,  
The name of which at Brutis first began. 2684  
Londene hath shippis be the se to saille,  
Bachus at Wynchestre gretli doth auaille,  
Worcetre with frutis haboundeth at the fulle,  
Herford with beestis, Cotiswold with wolle, 2688

There are hot  
baths in Bath,  
York has  
timber, Corn-  
wall mines,

Bathe hote bathes, holsum for medecyne,  
York mihti tymber for gret auauntage,  
Cornewaile myneres in to myne,

2671. deedis] *om.* H.

2475. westward] west H.

2676. Spaigne] in Spaigne B. S.

2680. &] *om.* H, R 3. 2684. at] & H.

2686. Wynchestre] Westmynstre H, Westmenstre R 3.

2691. Cornewale H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 163 recto.

- Salisburie beestis ful sauage,  
Whete, melk & honi, plente for eueri age,  
Kent and Cauntirburi hath gret commodite  
Of sondri fishes ther taken in the se. 2692 Salisbry wild  
cattle, Kent  
and Canter-  
bury have  
plenty of fish.
- Bochas reherseth, ther is eek in Breteyne  
Found of geet a ful precious stoon,  
Blak of colour & vertuous in certeyne  
For siknessis many mo than oon,  
Poudir of which wil discure anon,  
Yif it be dronke (thouh it be secre),  
Of maydenhod the broke chastite. 2696 As Bochas  
says, jet is  
found in  
Britain, and  
its powder  
when drunk  
will quickly  
discover  
broken  
chastity. 2700
- Ther been eke\* perlis founde in muskel shelles;  
And thei [be] beste that haue most whitnesse.  
And, as the book of Brutus also telles,  
How kyng Arthour, to speke of worthynesse,  
Passed al kynges in marcial prowesse;  
Touchyng his lyne & his roial kynreede,  
Who that list see, in Brutus he may reede. 2704 There are also  
pearls, and  
the whitest  
are the best.  
King Arthur  
surpassed all  
kings in  
marcial  
prowess,  
and his line  
is described  
in the Brut. 2708
- His fadir callid Vter Pendragoun, [p. 397]  
A manli kniht and famous of corage,  
Of fals envie moordrid be poison;  
His sone Arthour, but yong & tendre of age,  
Be ful assent of al his baronage  
Be successioun crownid anon riht,  
Callid of Europe the moste famous kniht. 2712 His father  
was Uther  
Pendragon,  
and after he  
had been  
murdered  
by poison,  
Arthur was  
crowned king. 2716
- Curteis, large and manly of dispence,  
Merour callid off liberalite,  
Hardi, strong and of gret prouidence.  
And of his knihtli magnanymyte  
He droof Saxones\* out of his contre,  
Conquered bi prowesse of his myhti hond  
Orcadois, Denmark and Houlond, 2720 Arthur was  
courteous and  
a mirror of  
liberality,  
hardy and of  
great foresight.  
He drove out  
the Saxons  
and conquered  
the Orkneys,  
Denmark and  
Holland,  
Ireland, Nor-  
way, Gaul,  
Scotland and  
France, by  
the counsel of  
prudent  
Merlin. He  
founded the  
order of the  
Round Table, 2724
- Hirelond, Norway, Gaule, Scotlond & France.  
As Martis sone to the werris meete,  
Wrouht bi counsail, and bi the ordynaunce  
Of prudent Merlyn, callid his prophete.  
And, as I fynde, he leet make a seete, 2728

2693. whete melk] whetmele H.

2697. geet] gret R.

2703. eke] of B, R, J.

2717. dispence] expense R. 2721. Saxones] Saxoyns B.

2723. holonde H, Holande R 3. 2727. Merlyn] Marly H.

- Amon[g] his Bretouns most famous & notable,  
 Thoruh al the world callid the Round[e] Table.
- and chose out  
 the most  
 famous knights  
 and bound  
 them by  
 statute
- Most worthi knihtis, preeued of ther hond,  
 Chose out be Arthour this ordre haue begunne; 2732  
 Ther famous noblesse thoruh euery Cristen lond  
 Shon be report as doth the mydday sonne;  
 To Famys paleis the renoun is vp ronne,  
 Statutis set be vertuuous ordenaunce, 2736  
 Vndir *proffessioun* of marcial *gouernaunce*.
- to be always  
 armed, except  
 when they  
 slept, and to  
 sustain rightful  
 quarrels
- The firste statut in the[r] registre founde,  
 Fro which thei sholde nat declyne of riht,  
 Be ful assuraunce of oth and custum bounde, 2740  
 Ay to be armyd in platis forgid briht,  
 Except a space to reste\* hem on the niht,  
 Seeke auentures, & ther tyme spende  
 Rihtful quarellis to susteene & diffende. 2744
- and help the  
 weaker party  
 if justice were  
 on his side.
- The feebler parti, yif he hadde riht,  
 To ther poweer manli to supporte,  
 Yif that thei wern requered of any wiht  
 Folk disconsolat to bern vp & conforte, 2748  
 At alle tymes men may of hem\* reporte,  
 No maner wise thei do no violence  
 And ageyn tirauntes make knihtli resistance,
- They were  
 bound to com-  
 fort the dis-  
 consolate and  
 to resist  
 tyrants, so that  
 widows and  
 maidens were  
 protected and  
 children re-  
 stored to their  
 inheritance, and  
 always ready to  
 make them-  
 selves strong in  
 the defence of  
 holy church  
 and their  
 country.
- That widwes, maidnes suffre no damage 2752  
 Be fals oppressioun of hatful cruelte,  
 Restoren childre to ther trewe heritage,  
 Wrongli exiled folk to ther contre,  
 And for hooli chirchis liberte 2756  
 Reedi euere to make hemsilue strong,  
 Rather to deie than suffre hem [to] haue wrong.
- For comoun proffit, as chose champions,  
*Pro republica* defendyng ther contre, 2760  
 Shewe ay themsilff[e] hardi as leouns,  
 Honoure tencrece, chastise dishoneste,  
 Releue al them that suffre aduersite,  
 Religious folk, haue hem in reuerence, 2764  
 Pilgrymes reseceyue that faille of *per* dispence.
- They performed  
 the seven deeds  
 of mercy in arms
- Callid in armys seuene deedis of mercy,  
 Burie\* soudiours that faile\* sepulture,

2742. reste] resten B. 2744. quarell R.

2749. At alle tymes] bat al tyme H. 2755. to] for R.

2767. Burie] Buried B, J— faile] failed B, J.



- Folk in prisoun delyuere hem graciousli, 2768  
 Swich as be poore, ther raunsoun to recure.  
 Woundid peepel that languisshe & endure,  
 Which *pro republica* manli spent her blood, —  
 The statut bond to do suich folkis good. 2772
- To putte hemsilff neuer in auenture  
 But for mateeres that wer iust & trewe,  
 Afforn prouided that thei stood[e] sure,  
 The ground weel knowe, wer it of old or newe. 2776  
 And aftir that the mateer whan thei knewe,  
 To proceede knihtli & nat feyne,  
 As riht requereth\*, ther quarelis to darreyne.
- A clerk ther was to cronicle al ther deedis, 2780  
 Bi pursyuauntis maad to hym report  
 Of ther expleit and ther goode speedis,  
 Rad & songe, to folk gaff gret confort.  
 Thes famous knihtis makyng ther resort 2784  
 At hih[e] feestis, euerich took his seete  
 Lik ther estat, as was to them meete.
- Oon was voide\* callid the se pereilous,  
 As Sang Real doth pley[n]li determyne, 2788  
 Noon to entre but the most vertuouus,  
 Of God prouided to been a pure virgyne,  
 Born bi\* discent tacomplisshe & to fyne,  
 He allone, as cheeff and souereyne, 2792  
 Al auentures of Walis & Breteyne.
- Among al kynges renommed & famous, [p. 398]  
 As a briht sonne set amynd the steris,  
 So stood Arthour notable & glorious, 2796  
 Lik fresh[e] Phebus castyng his liht aferris.  
 In pes lik Argus; most marcial in þe werris;  
 As Ector hardi, lik Vlixes tretable,  
 Callid among Cristene, kyng most honourable. 2800
- His roial court he did[e] so ordeyne,  
 Thoruh ech contre so ferr sprad out þe liht,  
 Who that euer thidir cam to pleyne,

and never put  
 themselves in  
 adventure  
 except for just  
 causes.

There was a  
 clerk, who re-  
 corded their  
 deeds; and at  
 high feasts  
 each took his  
 seat according  
 to his rank.

One seat was  
 empty, called  
 the See Per-  
 ilous, and  
 only the most  
 virtuouus  
 could place  
 himself  
 there.

Arthur was to  
 other kings as  
 a bright sun  
 set amidst the  
 stars; he was  
 Argus, Hector,  
 Ulysses in one.

The light of  
 his royal court  
 spread abroad  
 through other  
 realms, and

2779. requered B, J — ther] þe H — quarell R.

2781. pusyuauntis R, pusivauntis H, purcevauntys J.

2784. Thes] þe H.

2786. estat] staat R.

2787. voide] wide B, wilde J.

2788. seyn Greall H, seyn Geral R 3, Seyn Greal P, Sank Riall J.

2791. bi] of B, J.

- there was  
always a knight  
ready at hand  
to defend the  
oppressed. Be wrong oppressid\*, & requered of riht, 2804  
In his diffence he sholde fynde a kniht  
To hym assigned, fynalli tatende  
Be marcial doom his quarel to diffende.
- The challenges  
of strange  
knights were  
also accepted. Yif it fill soo that any straunge kniht 2808  
Souht auentures, and thidir cam fro ferre  
To doon armys, his request maad of riht,  
His chalenge seyn, wer it of pes or werre,  
Was accepted, to the court cam nerre, 2812  
Lik as he cam with many or allone,  
Thei wer delyuered; forsake was neuer one.
- and there was  
a school of  
marcial doctrine  
for the young. Ther was the scoole of marcial doctrine 2816  
For yonge knihtes to lernen al the guise,  
In tendre age to haue\* ful disciplyne  
On hors or foote be notable excersise;  
Thyng take in youthe doth help in many wise,  
And Idilnesse in greene yeeris gonne 2820  
Of al vertu clipseth the sheene\* sonne.
- and all wronged  
people, widows  
and maidens of  
any nation  
were received,  
and a knight  
assigned to  
their defence. Widwes, maidnes, oppressid folk also, 2824  
Of extort wronges wrouht be tyrannye,  
In that court, what nacioun cam therto,  
Resceyuid wer; ther list no man denie.  
Of ther compleyntis fond reedy remedie,  
Maad no delay, but foorth anon[e] riht 2828  
Them to diffende asigned was a kniht.
- The knights  
were also  
bound to tell  
truthfully to  
the registrar  
all that befell  
during their  
adventures; Eek bi ther ordre thei bounde wer of trouthe, 2832  
Be assuraunce & be oth Isworn,  
In ther emprises, and lette for no slouthe,  
Pleynli to telle how thei haue hem born,  
Ther auentures of thynges do beforne, 2832  
Riht as it fill, spare in no maneere  
To telle ech thyng onto ther registreer.
- and their  
statements  
were sworn. Thyng openli doon or thyng that was secre, 2836  
Of auentures as betwixe tweyne,  
Or any quarel take of volunte  
Treuly reporte, and platli nat to feyne,  
Them to be sworn, the statut did ordeyne, 2840  
No[uh]t conselid of worshep nor of shame,  
To be registred reporte the silue same.

2804. oppressid] repressid B. 2809. aventuræ H.  
2817. haue] lerne B. 2821. sheene] cleer B, clere J, cleare P.  
2825. wer ther] ther thei H. 2841. conselid] cownsailid H.

- And to conclude, the statutis han vs lered,  
 Eueri quarel groundid on honeste, 2844 Every honest quarrel was defended to the death.  
 In that court what kniht was requerid,  
 In the diffence of trouthe and equite,  
 Falshod excludid and duplicitie,  
 Shal ay be reedi to susteene that partie, 2848  
 His lyff, his bodi to putte in iupartie.
- Thus in Breteyne shon the cleer[e] liht  
 Of cheualrye and of hih prowesse,  
 Which thoruh the world[e] shadde his bemys  
 briht, 2852 Thus the clear light of chivalry shone in Britain;
- Welle of worshep, conduit of al noblesse,  
 Imperial court al wrongis to redresse,\*  
 Hedspryng of honour, of largesse cheef cisterne,  
 Merour of manhod, of noblesse the lanterne. 2856
- Yit was ther neuer seyn so briht a sonne,  
 The someres day in the mydday speere  
 So fress[h]li shyne, but sum skies donne  
 Mihte percas courtyne his bemys cleere; 2860 but the sun is never so bright but that sometimes a passing cloud throws it into the shadow;  
 Oft it fallith, whan Fortune makth best cheere and Fortune often smiles most kindly when she is most to dread.  
 And falsli smylith in hir double weede,  
 Folk seyn expert, than is she most to dreede.
- Thus whan the name of this worthi kyng  
 Was ferthest sprad be report & memorye, 2864 Thus, while Arthur was flowering in his strength,  
 In eueri rewm his noblesse most shynyng,  
 Al his emprises concludyng with victorie,  
 This double goddesse envied at his glorie 2868  
 And caste menys be sum maner treyne  
 To clipse the liht of kniithod in Breteyne.
- Thus whil Arthour stood most honourable  
 In his estat, flouryng in lusti age, 2872 the Romans sent to him for tribute, outrageously claiming a title from Julius Cæsar.  
 Among his knihtis of the round[e] table,  
 Hiest of princis on Fortunis stage,  
 The Romeyns sente to hym for truage,  
 Gan make a cleyrn froward & outraious, 2876  
 Takyng ther title of Cesar Iulivs.
- The same tyme, this myhti kyng Arthour [p. 399]  
 Conquered hadde Gaule & also Fraunce,

2852. the] al þe H — his beemys shad so briht H, R 3.  
 2854. redresse] repressse B, J. 2858. 2nd the] om. R.  
 2861. best] om. R. 2863. she] om. H — to] om. H.  
 2864. this] þat H. 2870. Eclipse H.  
 2876. Gan] Gayn R. 2877. ther] þe H.

- This happened  
at a time after  
Arthur had  
been victorious  
in France.      Outraied Frolle, and lik a conquerour 2880  
Brouhte Parys vndir obeissaunce,  
Took hem to grace, & with his ordenaunce  
Gat al Aungoie, Aungerys\* & Gascoyne,  
Peitow, Nauerne, Berry & Burgoyne. 2884
- He conquered  
Paris, Gascony,  
the country of  
Poitiers and  
Touraine, and  
kept possession  
for nine years.      Cessed nat, but ded his besi peyne,  
Most lik a kniht heeld forth his passage,  
Gat al the lond of Peiteres & Towreyne,  
Ther cites yolde, to hym thei did homage; 2888  
To be rebell thei fond non auauntage,  
Soiourned in France, as seith the cronicleer,  
Heeld pocessioun the space of nyne year.
- He held a  
feast in Paris,  
and divided the  
lands of France  
among his  
princes and  
barens.      Heeld a feeste ful solempne at Parys, — 2892  
Al the contres which he gat in Fraunce,  
Lik a prince ful prouident & wis,  
Which hadde of fredam most\* roial suffisaunce,  
Of al his conquest the contres in substaunce, 2896  
For his princis and barouns so prouided,  
Lik ther desertis he hath hem deuided.
- To Kay he  
gave Anjou and  
Maine, to  
Bedevere Nor-  
mandy, to  
Berel the  
Duchy of  
Burgundy,      To his senescall that was callid Kay  
Aungoye\* & Meyn he gaff al that partie; 2900  
To his botleer, was maad[e] no delay,  
Callid Bedewar, he gaf Normandie;  
To a baroun, nih cosyn of allie,  
A manli kniht which namyd was Berell, 2904  
Gaff the duchie of Burgoyne euerydeell.
- and reseruing  
other lordships  
for himself, re-  
turned to  
Britain and  
convened a  
great parlia-  
ment in  
Carleon.      Thus he departid lordships of that lond,  
Wher he thouhte was most expedient;  
Summe he reserued in his owne hond, 2908  
Ageyn to Breteyne retournid of entent,  
Sent out writtes, heeld a gret parlement,  
Afftir which he made a feeste anon  
In the contre Icallid Gloumorgon, 2912
- Ten kings were  
there ready to  
obey Arthur,  
thirteen earls,  
many barons,      At a gret cite namyd Carlioun,  
As [it] is remembrid be writyngis,  
Cam many prince and many fressh baroun,  
In noubre, I fynde, that ther wer ten kynges, 2916  
Reedi tobeie Arthour in alle thynges;

2883. Aungerys] Aungorys B.      2885. nat] om. R.  
2894. prouident] prudently H.      2895. most] ful B, J.  
2900. Aungoyne B, P.  
2902. Bedwar R, Bedwete H.

Present also, as it was weel seene,  
Ther wer of erlis reknid ful thretteene.

Al the knihtes of the rounde table, 2920 and all the  
Feste of Pentecost, a feeste princenal, knights of the  
Many estatis famous & honourable Round Table.  
Of princis, barouns born of the blood roial  
Wer ther present\*, and in especial 2924  
Al tho that wern be oth & promys bounde  
To brothirhede\* of the table rounde.

And it fill so, whil that kyng Arthour  
As appartened sat in his estat, 2928 Then came  
Ther cam tuelue sent down be gret labour twelve richly  
Of olde mene chose [out] of the Senat, Romans chosen clad old  
Sad of ther port, demvre & temporat, by the Senate to present the  
Richeli clad, of look and off visage, 2932 claims of  
Grehored [echon], sempte of riht gret age. Rome.

First cunnyngli, as thei thouht it due,  
Cause of ther comyng & pleykli what thei mente, —  
First of assent the kyng thei gan salue, 2936 They saluted  
Next aftir that thei tolde who them sente, the king and  
And ther lettres meekli thei presente, meekly pre-  
Concludyng thus, to speke in breef langage, sented their  
How the Romeyns axe of hym truage. 2940 credentials,  
demanding  
immediate pay-  
ment of the  
tribute,

Custumyd of old sith go many [a] day,  
Whan that Cesar conquered first Breteyne,  
The kyng requeryng to make hem no delay.  
Arthour abood, list nothyng to seyne; 2944 which they  
But al the court gan at hem disdeyne; said dated  
The proude Bretouns of cruel hasti blood back to the  
Wolde hem haue slay[e]n euene ther thei stood. time of  
Cesar's con-  
quest. Arthour  
was silent, but  
his court would  
have slain the  
Roman envoys.

“Nay,” quod Arthour to al his officeeres, 2948 “Nay,” said  
“Witbynne our court thei shal haue no damage; Arthour, “they  
Thei entred been and kome as massageris, shall have no  
And men also gretli falle in age. damage in our  
Let make hem cheer[e] with a glad visage.” 2952 court.”  
Took his counsail of suich as wer most wise,  
With this ansuere seid in curteis wise:

2924. ther present] present ther B.

2926. brothirhede] brothreed B. 2927. whil that] þat while H.

2930. of] om. R. 2931. temperate H.

2933. echon] om. J — gret] om. R.

2935. what] þat H. 2946. hasty cruel H.

2948. his] these R. 2954. this] his R.

- His answer was,  
"You threaten  
me with war,
- "Your lettres rad and pleynli vndirstonde,  
The teneur hool rehersid in this place, 2956  
Touching the charge which ye haue tak on honde,  
To yiue ansuere rehersid in short space,  
Be woord & writyng ye gretli me manace,  
How ye purpose with many strong bataille 2960  
Passe the mounteyns me felli for tassaille.
- but you need  
not trouble to  
come the entire  
way; I will  
shorten your  
journey, with  
God's grace."
- It nedeth nat suich conquest to a-legge [p. 400]  
Ageyn[es] Bretouns of non old truage,  
Of comyng doun your weie I shal abregge, 2964  
With Goddis grace shorte your passage.  
Mak no delay, but with my barounage  
Passe the se withoute long tarieng  
To meete Romeyns at ther doun komyng." 2968
- At their de-  
parture they  
were given rich  
gifts, and, re-  
turning to  
Rome, reported  
Arthur's boun-  
teous liberality.
- This was the ansuere youe to the massagers.  
At ther departy[n]g bar with hem gret richesse,  
The kyng bad so vnto his officeres.  
Ageyn to Roome in haste thei gan hem dresse, 2972  
Pleynli reportyng the bounteuous\* largesse  
Of worthi Arthour, considred all[e] thynges,  
Of Cristendom he passed all othir kynges.
- They told  
Lucius that  
he excelled all  
others in  
chivalry, and  
that his knights  
were the best  
in Europe;
- Arthuris court was the souers and well 2976  
Of marcial power\*, to Lucyvs thei tolde,  
And how that he all othir did excell  
In chualrie, with whom ther wer withholde  
The chose knihtis, bothe yong & olde, 2980  
In al Europe, who can conside ariht,  
Of al noblesse the torchis be ther liht.
- they said  
further, that  
he would pay  
no tribute, for  
he held no  
land of the  
Romans.
- He cast hym nat to paien no truage,  
Seide of the Romeyns [how] he heeld no lond, 2984  
Which to\* diffende he wil make his passage,  
"Of your cleymys to breke atoo the bond;"  
And knihtli preeue [it] with his [owne] hond,  
"Ye haue no title, ye nor your cite, 2988  
Ageyn the Bretouns, which euer haue stonde free."

2956. tenour R, H.

2972. thai gan in hast H.

2973. the] om. H — bounteuous] plenteuous B, J.

2975. othir] om. H.

2977. power] prowess B, J, P.

2984. how] om. R. 2985. to] for to B, R, J.

2987. it and owne are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, om. in B,

R, J, P, H 5, H, R 3.

2989. haue] hath R.

- With al the kyngdames soget to Rome toun,  
 Kynges, princis aboff the hih mounteyns,  
 With Lucyus thei be descendid doun 2992  
 To meete Bretouns upon the large pleyns.  
 Arthour[i]s comyng gretli he disdeyns,  
 Because he hadde, pley[n]li to descryue,  
 In multitude of peep[er]le swich[e] fyue. 2996
- At Southhamptoun Arthour took the se  
 With al his knihtis of the Rounde Table,  
 Behynde he leffte to gouerne the contre  
 His cosyn Modred, vntrusti & vnstable, 3000  
 And, at a preef, fals & deceyuable,  
 To whom Arthour of trust took al the lond,  
 The crowne except, which he kept in his hond.
- Fro Southhamptoun Arthour gan to saile 3004  
 With al the worthi lordis of Breteyne,  
 At Barbeflu fond good arryuaile;  
 He and his princis ther passage did ordeyne  
 Thoruh Normandie, France & eek Burgeyne 3008  
 Vp to a cite callid Augustence,  
 Wher he first fond of Lucyus the *presence*.
- So large a feeld nor suich a multitude  
 Of men of armys assemblid on a pleyn 3012  
 Vpon a day, shortli to conclude,  
 Togidre assemblid afforn wer\* neuer seyn.  
 Lucivs hadde on his partie certeyn  
 Estward the world[e] al the cheualrie 3016  
 Brouht be the mounteyns doun toward Germanye.
- Ther wardis sett, in ech a gret bataile,  
 With ther capteyns to gouerne hem & guye,  
 Arture with Bretouns the Romeins gan\* assaile, 3020  
 Fond many Sarsyns vpon that partie.  
 The Bretoun Gaufride doth pley[n]li specefie,  
 As he of Arthure þe prowess doth descryue,  
 He slouh that day of Sarsyns kynges fyue. 3024

The Romans came down with Lucius to meet the Britons on the plains; and Lucius, who had five times the number of Arthur's men, was contemptuous.

Arthur took ship at Southampton, and left his traitorous cousin Mordred as regent.

He landed at Harfleur and marched to meet Lucius and found him at Augusta.

Never before was such a large army seen as that of the Romans.

There were many Saracens with the Romans, and Geoffrey says that Arthur slew five of their kings;

3000. Modred] moordred R.

3003. kept] toke H.

3005. worthi lordis of] lordis of worthi H.

3006. Barbeflu] Barflue J, Harflue P.

3011. suich] so gret R. 3013. day] playn H.

3014. wer] was B, J. 3017. the] om. R.

3019. hem] om. H.

3020. gan] did B, J.

and the slaughter was so great that it were tedious to describe it.	The grete slauhtre, theffusioun of blood That was that day vpon outhr side, Ech ageyn othir so furious was & woud, Lik for the feeld as Fortune list prouide, That yiff I sholde theron longe abide To write the deth, the slauhtre & the maneere, Touchyng the feeld wer tedious for to heere.	3028
To conclude, Lucius was slain and the proud Romans were put to flight;	To conclude & leue the surplusage, In that bataile ded was many a kniht, The consul Lucyus slay[e]n in that rage, The proude Romeyns be force put to fliht. Of gentillesse Arthour anon riht Leet the bodi of Lucyus be caried Ageyn to Roome; it was no lenger taried.	3032  3036
and, like a king, Arthur saw that his dead princes and lords and knights were buried.	The worthi princis and lordes that wer dede, And manli knihtis abidyng with Arthour, Lik a kyng solempneli took heed That thei wer buried be dilligent labour. And in this while, lik a fals tretour, His cosyn Modred did his besi peyne To take fro hym the kyngdam of Breteyne.	3040
In the meanwhile Mordred wanted to be king in Britain,	So as the stori pleynli maketh mynde, Modred falsli, to his auantage, Entreted hem that wer lefft behynde, Vnder colour of fraudulent langage, Gaff hem* gret fredam; & þei did hym homage, That be his fals[e] conspiracioun Brouht al Breteyne into rebellioun.	[p. 401]  3048  3052
and persuaded the people to rebel against Arthur,	Be faire behestis & many freendli signe Drouh the people to hym in sondri wise, Shewed hym outward goodli & benigne, Gaf libertes & graunted gret fraunchise To make Bretouns ther souereyn lord despise. And purueyaunce he gan ordeyne* blyue To keepe the portes, he shold[e] nat aryue.	3056
making fair promises and granting great freedoms.	Whan kyng Arthour hadde knouleching Of this fals tresoun and al the purueiaunce That Modred made, he, lik a manli kyng,	3060
But when Arthur heard of this false treason he		

3026. That] ther H. 3034. rage] orage (*perhaps; the o is mutilated and may stand for another incomplete letter*) H.

3040. And] a H — knyht H.

3050. hem] hym B. 3055. hym] om. R.

3058. ordeyne] make B, J. 3061. this] his R.



- Lefte Burgoyne & al the lond of France,  
 Cast on Modred for to do vengauce;  
 Took the se, [&] with gret apparaile  
 Cast at Sandwich to make his arrivaile. 3064 sailed home  
 and landed at  
 Sandwich,
- Modred was reedi *with* knihtis a gret noumbre,  
 Made a strong feeld to meete hym on the pley<sup>n</sup>, 3068 where he met  
 Mordred.  
 In purpos fulli Arthour to encoumbre,  
 At which aryuaile slay[e]n was Gawayn,  
 Cosyn to Arthour, a noble kniht certayn;  
 Eek Aungisel was slay[e]n on the stronde,  
 Kyng of Scottes, or he myhte\* londe. 3072 There Gawaln  
 and Anguise,  
 king of the  
 Scots, were  
 slain.
- Maugre Modred Arthour did aryue,  
 The ground recurid lik a manli kniht  
 (For feer of whom, anon aftir blyue  
 The seid[e] Modred took hym to the fliht), 3076 Arthur landed  
 in spite of  
 Mordred, and  
 after defeating  
 him went to  
 London and  
 shut the gates.
- Toward Londene took his weie riht,  
 The gatis shet, & kept was the cite  
 Ageyn Modred; he myhte haue non entre. 3080
- In al haste to Cornewaile he fledde,  
 The suerd of Arthure he durste nat abide,  
 List he shold[e] leyn his lyff to wedde;  
 Yit for hymself[e] thus he gan prouide,  
 With multitude gadrid on his side  
 Put lyf and deth that day in auenture,  
 That day to deie or the feeld recure. 3084 Mordred fled to  
 Cornwall and  
 collecting a  
 fresh army  
 fought Arthur  
 once more.
- In Fortune ther may be no certayn,  
 Vpon whos wheel al brotilnesse is foundid:  
 Moodred that day in the feeld was slayn  
 And noble Arthour to the deth was woundid.  
 Be which the feeld of Bretouns was confoundid,  
 Of so gret slauhtre & goode knihtis lorn  
 Vpon oo\* day, men haue nat herde\* tofor<sup>n</sup>. 3088 In this fight  
 Mordred was  
 slain and  
 Arthur mort-  
 ally wounded.
- Aftir the bataile Arthour for a while  
 To staunche his woundis & hurtis to recure,  
 Bor[n] in a liteer cam into an Ile  
 Callid Aualoun; and ther of auenture,  
 As seid Gaufrid recordeth be scripture,  
 How kyng Arthour, flour of cheualrie,  
 Rit with his knihtis & lyueth in Fairye. 3096 After the battle  
 Arthur was  
 borne to an  
 isle called  
 Avalon, where,  
 as Geoffrey  
 records, he still  
 rides out with  
 his knights and  
 lives in Fairy-  
 land.

3067. a] & R. 3070. rivaile H. 3073. myhte] cam to B.  
 3081. Cornwall H. 3087. feeld] feel R.  
 3094. oo] a B — herde] seyn B, seen J. 3098. Aualon P.

- Thus the sun of Britain was translated to the sky, where he sits crowned in the heavenly mansion, the first of the nine worthies.
- Thus of Breteyne translaid was þe sunne  
Vp to the riche sterri briht dongoun, —  
Astronomeeres weel reherse kunne, — 3104  
Callid Arthuris constellacioun,  
Wher he sit crownid in the heuenl[y] mansioun  
Amyd the paleis of stonis cristallyne,  
Told among Cristen first of þe worthi nyne. 3108
- Britons still believe old Merlin's proph-  
ecy that  
Arthur shall  
come again  
some day to  
reign in Eng-  
land.
- This errour yit abit among Bretouns,\*  
Which foundid is vpon the prophecie  
Of olde Merlyn, lik ther oppynyouns:  
He as a kyng is crownid in Fairie, 3112  
With sceptre and suerd, & with his regalie  
Shal resorte as lord and souereyne  
Out of Fairye & regne in Breteyne,
- At any  
rate his epitaph  
says, "Here lies  
King Arthur,  
who shall reign  
again."
- And repaire ageyn the Rounde Table; 3116  
Be prophecie Merlyn set the date,  
Among[es] princis kyng incomparable,  
His seete ageyn to Carlioun translate.\* 3120  
The Parchas sustren sponne so his fate;  
His epitaphie recordeth so certeyn:  
Heer lith kyng Arthour, which shal regne ageyn.
- Now I will re-  
turn to Bochas,  
but first I'll  
write a lenvoy  
on Mordred's  
treason.
- Vnto Bochas I wil ageyn retourne,  
Afforn rehersid parcel of his prowesse, 3124  
Theron tabide me list no mor soiourne,  
But to remembre the gret vnkynd[e]nesse,  
The conspiracioun, þe tresoun, the falsnesse  
Doon to kyng Arthour be his cosyn Modrede, 3128  
Make a Lenvoye, that al men may it reede.

## [Lenvoy.]

- This tragedy of Arthur bids princes to beware of treason. Nothing is more perilous.
- THIS tragedie of Arthour heer folwyng [p.402]  
Bit princis all bewar of fals tresoun;  
For in al erthe is non mor pereilous thing 3132  
Than trust of feith, wher is decepcioun  
Hid vndir courtyn of fals collusioun.  
For which men sholde — I holde þe counsail good —  
Bewar afforn euere of vnkynde blood. 3136

3103. briht] *om.* H. 3107. the] that R.

3109. Bretouns] Breteyns B.

3118. princis kyng] kyngis prince H, R 3.

3119. translate] to translate B, J. 3120. sponne] span H.

3127. 3rd the] & H, R 3. 3129. it] *om.* R.

3133. Than] That H — of] on H. 3135. men] none R.

The world [is] dyuers, Fortune ay chaungyng,  
 In euery contre & eueri regioun;  
 At a streiht neede fewe freendis abidyng;  
 Long absence causeth deuisioun:\*  
 And yif princis be fals ambicioun,\*  
 Nih of allie, shewe too facis in oon hood,  
 Lat men bewar euere of vnkynde blood.

The world is  
 always chang-  
 ing. At a  
 need we have  
 few stead-  
 fast friends.  
 Men must al-  
 ways beware  
 of unkind rela-  
 tions.

Who was mor hardi of princis heer regnyng  
 Or mor famous of marcial renoun  
 Than whilom was, his enmyes outraieng,  
 Arthur, cheef sonne of Brutis Albioun?  
 But, for al that, the disposicioun  
 Of Fate and Fortune, most furious & wood,  
 Caused his destruccioun be vnkynde blood.

3144 Who was more  
 hardy and  
 famous than  
 Arthur? Yet  
 he was de-  
 stroyed by  
 unkind blood!

What mor contrarious to nature in shewing  
 Than fair pretence, double of entencioun,  
 Gret alliaunces frowardli werkyng?  
 Hid vndir flours, a serpent cast poison,  
 Briht siluir scaled, damageth the dragoun;  
 Ech werm sum parti tarageth of his brood.  
 And what mor pereilous than vnkynde blood?

3152 What is more  
 evil than fair  
 pretence, like  
 a silver-scaled  
 serpent hidden  
 under flowers?  
 What more  
 perilous than  
 unkind blood?

Noble Princis, on Arthour remembryng,  
 Deemeth the day of Phebus goyng down:  
 Al is nat gold that is cleer shynyng,  
 Afforn prouided in your inward resoun,  
 Fals vndirmynyng & supplantacioun,  
 Remembryng ay with Arthour how it stood,  
 Be conspiracioun of vnkynde blood.

3160 Noble Princes,  
 remember the  
 story of Arthur,  
 and do not  
 deem the day  
 fair until the  
 sun has set.

¶ An exclamacion a-geyn men þat been vnkynde  
 to þeir kynrede.<sup>1</sup>

**A**GEYN\* kynreedis & vnkynde alliaunces,  
 Bochas makth heer an exclamacioun  
 Vpon Modred, which with his ordenaunces  
 Caused of Arthour fynal destruccioun,  
 The sunne eclipsyng of Brutis\* Albioun,

3168 Bochas here  
 exclaims upon  
 Mordred, who  
 caused the  
 destruction of  
 Arthur, not-  
 withstanding  
 that he trusted  
 him above all  
 men.

3137. The] This R. 3138. contre] court R.  
 3139. abidyng] fyndyng H. 3140. deuisioun] discencioun B, R, J.  
 3141. ambicioun] deuisioun R, B, J, derision R 3.  
 3146. Than þat H. 3156. brood] bloode H, R 3.  
 3165. Ageyn] Yeyn B. 3169. Brutis] Brutus B, J, P.

¶ <sup>1</sup> The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 165 verso: "An exclamacioun of Bochas ageyn kynredys vnkynde."

- Natwithstondyng, pleynli to descryue,  
He trusted hym abof al men on lyue.
- It is strange and hateful to God for any man to be unkind to his kindred. It is a merueile & vnkouth to deuise, 3172  
Be what occasioun or be what corage,  
That a man sholde in any maner wise  
Be founde vnkynde vnto his lynage.  
Hatful to God, that in any age 3176  
Blood ageyn blood born of o kynreede  
Conspire sholde of malis or hatreede.
- It were vain to tarry on this matter. The story of Arthur and Mordred is well known. In this mateer it wer but veyn to tarie, 3180  
The stori knowe of Arthour & Modrede,  
Be blood allied, in werkyng most contrarie,  
Which made many Bretoun kniht to bleede;  
For be vsurping, conspiryng and falsheede  
Of seide Modred, most infortunat, 3184  
Caused al Breteyne to stond[e] desolat.
- All Britain stood desolate without her king; and the light of the Round Table was darkened and eclipsed by Mordred, the forsworn knight. First desolat be absence of ther kyng,  
Callid in his tyme of kynges most notable,  
The desolacioun of knihtis abidyng, 3188  
Whilom in Breteyne famous & honourable,  
Brethre echon of the Rounde Table,  
The which be Moodred, the false forswor kniht,  
Stod longe eclipsed & dirked of his lyht. 3192
- The monarchy was divided, that once stood whole, and all concluded in duplicity. The liht of noblesse þat shon thoruh al Breteyne  
Be fals Modred was dirkid off his bemys;  
The monarchie departid was on tweyne,  
That stood first oon *witb* his marcial stremys. 3196  
But aftirward the brihtnesse of his lemys  
Drouh to declyn be fals deuisioun,  
Which hath destroied ful many a regioun.
- Adieu welfare and prosperity where there is no concord. Trees cannot thrive when separated from their bark. Al this processe vpon\* duplicite 3200  
Pleynli concludeth, & blood that is\* vnkynde.  
A-dieu weelfare and al prosperite,  
Wher\* pes & concord been llefft behynde:  
Trees may nat thryue departid fro þe rynde, — 3204

3171. on] of R — on lyue] alive H. 3172. a] *om.* R.  
3173. occasioun] *comparisoun* H. 3175. vnto] to R.  
3185. to] *om.* H. 3187. his] this R. 3190. Brethren R.  
3191. 1st The] *om.* H, R 3 — forsworn R, J.  
3198. declyn] *dirknesse* R. 3200. vpon] vpon a B, R, J, H 5.  
3201. blood that is] that is blood B, J, H 5, that is blode is R,  
on bloode þat is H.  
3203. Wher] Ther B, J.

A pleyn exauple in Arthure & Modrede,  
Who can conceyue, & list ther stori reede.

[Off Gesevye kyng of venandre and of iij. othre  
kynges / and how they were destroyed.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR al these vnkouth straunge\* thingis, [p.403] Among five  
Tofor Iohn Bochas, as made is mencion, 3208 mighty kings,  
Ther cam toforn hym fyue myhti kinges Gelimer, king  
For to compleyne ther desolacioun. of the Vandals,  
First Giseli[n]e, kyng off the regioun came first to  
Callid Venandre, in werris ful contraire 3212 complain his  
Vnto a prince callid Balisaire. desolation.

And to this saide noble Balisaire, Together with  
Ful rennomed that tyme in cheualrie, the king of the  
The kyng of Gothes was also aduersaire; 3216 Goths he was  
And bothe attonis of hatrede & envie an enemy of  
Assentid fulli to hoolde chaumpartie Belisarius,  
Geyn Balisair, which thoruh his hih renoun who took them  
Took hem bothe and cast hem in prisoun. 3220 both captive  
and put them  
in prison.

Ther is no mor of them in Bochas founde. Then came  
But aftir them, in ordre be writyng, Amarales, king  
¶ Cam Amarales, with many bloodi wounde, of the Moors,  
Which in his tyme was of Maures kyng. who fought  
3224 John the  
Sanguinary  
without cause

Withoute cause or title of any thyng  
Vpon Ian Sangwyn gan werreye ageyn riht,  
Which thoruh al Affrik was oon the best[e] kniht.

The saide Ian, armyd in plate and maile, 3228 and was slain;  
Mette Amarales in Affrik on a sond, and that is all  
I can find  
remembered  
about him.

And heeld with hym a myhti strong bataile,  
And lik a kniht slouh hym with his hond,  
Droof al his people proudli fro þat lond. 3232

And in my book ther is non othir mynde  
To be remembrid of hym that I can fynde.

¶ Than Syndual, of Brentois lord & kyng,  
Tofor Bochas put hymself in pres, 3236  
Gan shewe his myscheef, pitousli pleynyng, Then Sindbal  
the Herulian  
began to  
describe his  
misfortune,

3207. straunge vnkouth B. 3211. Gelymer P.  
3212. Vandalia P. 3214. And to this saide noble] Vn to this  
noble saide H. 3219. Geyn] gey H.  
3223. Amarales] Attila P. 3226. Ian] Iohn H, P.  
3228. The] This H. 3229. Amarales] Attila P.  
3232. his] that R. — þat] þe H. 3235. Brentois] Bretonys  
R, Bretoun J, Briteyns H, Brentoys R 3, Brentois P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 165 verso.

- for he made war  
on Narses, a  
Roman knight.
- Whan he heeld werre, wilful & rek[e]les,  
Ageyn a prince callid Narsates,  
A Romeyn kniht, fers, hardi & riht strong 3240  
In his diffence whan men wold doon hym wrong.
- who was an  
eunuch,  
and captured  
Sindbal and  
hanged him.
- This Narsates, of cas or auenture,  
Thouh he in deede was a manli kniht,  
He failed membres in soth of engendrure. 3244  
His aduersaires he put echon to fliht,  
Took ther kyng, & foortwith anon riht,  
As the cronicle pley[n]li doth recorde,  
On hih[e] galwes he heng hym with a corde. 3248
- Soon afterward  
king Totila the  
Ostrogoth met  
Narses with a  
great army,  
and he too  
was defeated  
and slain.
- Of Narsetis aftir this victorie,  
¶ Kyng Totila hadde ful gret disdeyn;  
With a gret host, most pompous in his glorie,  
Kam upon hym & mette hym on a pley[n]. 3252  
With multitude thow he wer ouerleyn,  
Kyng Totila, which many man beheeld,  
Of Narsates was slay[e]n in the feeld.

[Trusimond kyng of Gepidois.]<sup>1</sup>

- Turisund, king of the Gepidæ,  
requested  
Bochas to write  
his adversity  
and the un-  
happy fate of  
his daughter  
Rosamond, to  
whom Fortune  
was contrary  
all her life.
- I**N ordre nexte Bochas doth [so] write, 3256  
Of Gepidois how king Trusimonde  
Requered hym that he wolde endite  
The grete aduersites in which he did habounde,  
And of his douhtir callid Rosymonde 3260  
The vnhappy chaunce to marken & descryue,  
To whom Fortune was contrarye al hir lyue.
- Alboin, king of  
Lombardy, slew  
Turisund in  
battle and  
afterwards  
married Rosa-  
mond.
- Alboinvs kyng of Lumbardie,  
Which many lond heeld in subieccioun, 3264  
Conquered Beeme, Pragve & Hungrie,  
The lond of Gepidois, with many regioun,  
Fauht with ther kyng, as maad is mencion,  
Slouh in bataille the said[e] Trusimonde, 3268  
Weddid aftir his douhtir Rosamonde.

3238. reklesses R.

3239. ycalled Narses P — Narsates] Narsarses H.

3242. Narses P, Narsates H.

3249. Narsates H, R, J, Narsetes R 3, Narses P.

3252. on] in H, R. 3256. so] om. R, J, H 5.

3257. Trusimonde] Eurismonde H, Ewrysmonde R 3, Trus-  
monde J, Turisounde P.

3263. Albonius or Alboinus B. 3266. regioun] dongoun H.

3268. Eurismonde H, R 3, Trusmond J, Turisounde P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 165 verso, in margin.

Myn auctour gretli comendeth hir beute  
 And writ also she was but yong of age,  
 Whos stori first, whan I dide see 3272  
 How vngracious was also hir mariage,  
 I gan wexe pale in my visage,  
 Gretli astoned, confus of verray shame  
 To write this stori in hyndryng of hir name. 3276  
 I wil forbern and breefli passen heere,  
 The surplusage lihtli ouerpasse;  
 For bi and bi to telle al the maneere  
 Of felonies that did hir herte embrace, 3280  
 It sholde blotte this book & eek difface.  
 For which I caste treuli & nat faille  
 Touching hir stori to make rehersaille.

(And when I first read her story and knew how ungracious her marriage was, I grew pale and confused at the thought of writing in detraction of her name.

So I will forbear and pass over the rest lightly; for it would blot this book to tell the manner of all her sins.)

[How Albonyus was moordred by his wif / and how she aftir most vicious was moordred also.]<sup>1</sup>

**K**YNG Alboinus, as ye shal vndirstonde, 3284  
 Aftir many conquest & victorie,  
 Which he hadde [had] both on se & londe,  
 To putte his name\* & triumphes in memorie,  
 Leet crie a feeste to his ences of glorie; 3288  
 At which[e] feeste, solempne & princepall,  
 So as he sat in his estat roiall,  
 Parcel for pride, parcel for gladnesse, [p. 404]  
 The queen present, the said[e] Rosamounde, 3292  
 Take and supprised he was *with* dronk[e]nesse,  
 Of myhti wynes which þat day did habounde,  
 Sent a goblet of gold, as it is founde, 3296  
 Vnto the queen, with licour ful plesaunt,  
 Bad to hir fadir [she] sholde drynke a taunt.  
 She dempte it was a maner moquerie,  
 First hir name and worshep to confounde,  
 To bidde hir drynke a taunt for hir partie 3300  
 To hir fadir, the said[e] Trusymounde,  
 Slay[e]n afforn with many bloodi wounde

After his victories King Alboin let cry a feast to put his triumph in memory,

and as he sat in his royal estate

he became drunk, and bade Queen Rosamond drink a taunt to her father.

She looked upon it as an insult to drink to her father, whom Alboin had slain, and determined to be revenged.

3276. this] his R — hir] his H.

3284. Albynus H, R 3, Albonyus R, Albonius or Alboinus B.

3287. names B. 3288. of] and R.

3294. which þat day] þat day which H, R 3.

3301. Eurismounde H, Ewrismounde R 3, Trusmond J, Turisounde P.

3302. bloodi] mortall H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 166 recto.

- Be Albonius, thoruh his vnhappi chaunce, —  
Of which rebuk she cast to do vengauce. 3304
- She waited a long time, and at last persuaded a squire named Peredeo to murder her lord,  
She bar the rancour ful long in hir entent,  
Which day be day gan renewe & encrece.  
A certeyn squieer she made of hir assent,  
Which tacomplisshe she wolde neuer cese. 3308  
And on another squieer she gan prese,  
Callid Peredeus, accorded al in oon,  
This false moordre texecute anon.
- which he did, although Alboin defended himself to the last with a broken spear.  
The day was set; whil he lay & sleepe 3312  
Fill upon hym *with* sharp suerdis grounde:  
Hir lord was slayn, alas, he took no\* keepe!  
Or he deide of Fortune he hath founde  
A speris hed[e] to a tronchoun bounde, 3316  
Hymself defendyng in that mortal striff;  
But slayn he was be tresoun of his wiff.
- After the murder Rosamond took all Alboin's treasure and fled with Hilmichis, her squire, to Ravenna.  
¶ Aftir this moordre tescape fro daungeer,  
This Rosamounde fledde awei be niht. 3320  
*With* hir went[e] Melchis hir squieer;  
Took a ship, sailed be sterre-liht,  
To Rauenne thei took the weie riht,  
Lad with hem for refut & socour 3324  
Of kyng Alboyne al the hool tresour.
- She then married Hilmichis, but growing tired of him, — for her affections were promiscuous, —  
Aftir she was [I]weddid to Melchis,  
Man of this world[e] stood most in hir grace.  
Hir loue appallid, set of him no pris; 3328  
For she nat koude be content in o place.  
Hir ioie was euere newe thing to purchase,  
Tassaie manye, plesid neuer *with* oon,  
Til bexperience she preuid hadde echon. 3332
- had an affair with the Provost of Ravenna. Hilmichis she sought to murder.  
Prouost of Rauenne & cheef *gouernour*,  
For the excellence of hir gret beute  
About al women loued hir paramour,  
Whan she entred first in that cite. 3336  
And thoruh hir fraude and duplicite

3303. Albonoys R.

3304. to] *om.* H.

3312. whil] whan H.

3314. he] or he H — no] *om.* H, non B, R.

3321. Melchis] Helmiges P — hir] his H.

3325. kyng Alboyne] Albonius J, Alboinus P.

3326. wedded to Helmiges P. 3329. o] no H.

3331. manye] *om.* H — neuer *with*] *with* nevir H.



- She caste moordre in hir froward auys  
 Hir newe husbonde that callid was Melchis.
- The hote somer in lusti fressh[e] May, 3340 One hot day  
 The same Melchis for heete & weerynesse when he was  
 Hymself to bathe wente a certeyn day, thirsty after  
 Kauht a gret thrust of\* feyntise in sothnesse. bathing, she  
 And Rosamounde, of infernal falsnesse, gave him a  
 Took a goblet, with licour gret foisoun, goblet of  
 Gaf hym drynke wyn medlid with poison. poisoned wine. 3344
- He drank up half, & therwithal he gan  
 Brest and beli to suelle & arise, 3348 After he had  
 Intoxicat, wex dedli pale & wan; his body began  
 And whan he dide hir tresoun aduertise, to swell and  
 He made hir drynke in the same wise, he grew deadly  
 Maugre hir wil, she myht it nat restreyne, — 3352 pale, and,  
 Guerdoun for moordre, — thei deide bothe tweyne. suspecting  
 treason, com-  
 pelled her to  
 drink the rest.  
 They both died.
- In this chapitle but litil frut I fynde,  
 Sauf onli this, to putte in remembraunce,  
 That men sholde calle ageyn to mynde, 3356 I find little  
 Moordre affor God requereth ay vengauce. profit in this  
 This funeral stori weied in ballaunce, chapter, except  
 Wrouht be Melchis, compassid first & founde that it reminds  
 Be fals tresoun of cursid Rosamounde. us that murder  
 3360 always cries  
 vengeance  
 before God.
- Slouh first hir lord Alboniv, as I seide,  
 Tueyne of hir squieres did excusioun,  
 Out of his slepe whan he did abraide.  
 Lat countirpeise what was ther guerdoun: 3364 Rosamond slew  
 Ech moordrid othir be drynkyng of poison; Alboin, and  
 Melchis drank first, & next drank Rosamounde; afterwards she  
 At them it gan; to them it did rebounde. and Hilmichis  
 killed one  
 another.
- Countirpeised o moordre for another: 3368 Both lost their  
 Alboniv slayn be Rosamounde his wiff lives; treason  
 Bassent of Melchis, & aftir ech to other punished by  
 The poison partid; ther gan a fatal striff. treason;  
 Moordre quit for moordre, thei bothe lost her lyff. 3372 murder for  
 murder.  
 Who vseth falsnesse, ful weel afferme I dar,  
 Shal with falsnesse be quit or he be war.

3339. newe is repeated in H. 3341. Helmiges P

3343. of] on B.

3352. it] hir R. 3359. Helmiges P.

3361, 69. Alboinus P. 3364. ther] hir H.

3366. 2nd drank] om. H.

As men give,  
so shall they  
receive; and as  
they deserve,  
such shall be  
their reward.

As thei departed, suich part ageyn þei took; [p. 405]

As men disserue, suich shal be ther meede. 3376

This froward story, eende of the Eihte Book,

Of Rosamounde & Melchis wrought in deede,

For short conclusioun biddith men take heede,

Thei shal resceyue ageynward \* suich mesour

As thei mesure vnto ther neih[e]bour. 3381

3378. Helmiges P.

3380. resceyue ageynward] ageynward resceyue B, P.

¶ *Finis libri octaui.*

¶ *Incipit IXus liber Bochasii.*

## BOOK IX.

[How the Emperoure Maurycyus his wif and his  
childre wer slayne atte Calcedoyne.] <sup>1</sup>

<p><b>T</b>O Franceis Petrak as Bochas vndertook, [p.407]          In eschewing of slouthe &amp; idilnesse,          As he began <i>taccomplish</i>* up his book,          Assuraunce maad to doon his besynesse;          Which thing remembrid gan his penne dresse,*          The Nyhnte Book, so God wold send hym grace,          It to parfourme yif he had lyff &amp; space.</p>	<p>As Bochas had          promised          Francis Pe-          trarch to do          his best, he          now made          ready his pen          to finish his          Ninth Book.</p>
<p>At the gynnyng sothli of his labour,          In his studie to hym ther did appeere          Mauricivs, the mihti emperour,          Which gan compleyne, rehersing the maneere          How he bi Phocas, cruel of look &amp; cheere,          Destroied was — wiff, childre &amp; kynreede —          The slauhtre kouth, who list ther stori reede.</p>	<p>8 And as he          began, the          mighty Em-          peror Maurice          came, com-          plaining how          he and his          family had          been murdered          by Phocas</p>
<p>The said[e] Maurice, as writ Bochas Iohn,          Was be Phocas brouht to destruccioun,          His wiff, his childre slay[e]n euerichon          At Calcedoyne, as maad is menciou[n],          Aftir whos deth he took pecessioun.</p>	<p>in Chalcedon.          16</p>
<p>The said[e] Phocas, as put is in memorie, —          Gaf Panteoun onto Seynt Gregorie,          Which was a temple of old fundacioun,          Ful of idoles upset on hih[e] stages.          Ther thoruh the world of eueri nacioun          Wer of ther goddis set up gret images,          To eueri kyngdam direct wer ther visages,          As poetis &amp; Fulgence be his lyue          In bookis olde pley[n]li doth descryue.</p>	<p>20 The same          Phocas gave          Saint Gregory          the Pantheon,          an old temple          full of the          idols of all          nations.          24</p>
<p>Eueri image hadde in his hand a belle,          As appartened to euery nacioun,          Which be crafft sum tokne sholde telle</p>	<p>28 Each image          had a bell in          its hand, that          rang when the</p>

3. *taccomplish*] accomplished B, R.

5. *is misplaced at end of stanza* B.

18. Calcedoyne] Macedoyn H, R 3. 21. Pantheon P.

29. his] *om.* H.

30. *appartened*] *appertenyth* H, *pertey-*  
*neth* J, P — *nacioun*] *Regioun* H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 166 verso.

- kingdom to  
which it be-  
lieved fell in  
revolt against  
Rome.
- Whan any kyngdam fill in rebellioun 32  
Or gan maligne ageyn[es] Roome toun;  
Swich to redresse with strong & mihti hond  
Sent a prync to chastise al that lond.
- The said temple  
was turned into  
a Christian  
church by Pope  
Boniface.
- The saide temple bilt of lym & ston, 36  
Pope Boniface\*, bookis specifice,  
Wher it was first callid Pantheon,  
Set up crossis upon ech partie,  
Halwid it to martirs & Marie, — 40  
Yeer be yeer[e] gynnyng off Nouembre  
The feeste holde, the martiloge doth remembre.
- The Emperor  
Maurice was  
slain in Asia  
in the cite of  
Chalcedon; and  
24 years after-  
wards Phocas  
was put to  
death by  
Heraclius.
- In Asie this emperour Maurice was slayn,  
In the cite that callid is Calcidonye,\* 44  
Al his houshold and many good Romayn  
Bi Phocas and Perciens, as had is in memorie.  
And Phocas afftir, for al his veynglorie,  
Slayn be Eraclivs, thouh he\* was emperour 48  
Foure and twenti\* wyntir and cheef gouernour.

[Off Machomet the fals prophete and how he beyng  
dronke was deuoured among swyn.]<sup>1</sup>

- After the death  
of Phocas,  
Muhammad ap-  
peared. He  
was a false  
prophet and a  
magician, born  
of low kindred  
in Arabia, and  
an idolater all  
his life.
- A**FFTIR the deth of Phocas, as I tolde,  
That Eraclius to regne first began,  
Cam Machomeet, in his tyme Iholde 52  
A fals prophete and a magicien,  
As bookis olde weel reherse can.  
Born in Arabia but of low kynreede,  
Al his lyue an idolastre in deede. 56
- When he grew  
older he was  
the first to use  
camels for  
carriage, and  
journeyed to  
Egypt and  
studied the  
Bible.
- And whan that he greuh to gretter age,  
Deceyuable in many sondri wises,  
With chamelis vsid first cariage:  
Wente to Egipt [to] fette marchaundises,\* 60  
Fals and double, sotil in his deuises;  
To Iewes & Cristene sondry tymes sent,  
Lerned the Olde a[nd] Newe Testament.

37. Pope] *blotted and erased* B, J — Bonifas B — bookis] as bookis J, as bokes P.

44. callid is] is callid H — Calcidonye] Calcidoine B.

48. he] who P — thouh he] he than B. 49. xxiii]ti B.

56. ydolatre R, H, R 3.

57. that] *om.* H — gretter] gret H. 59. camelis R, H, R 3.

60. to] *om.* H, R 3, P, H 5. 60 and 61 are transposed in B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 167 recto.

- As bookis olde recorde\* in that partie,  
 This Machomeet, this cursid fals[e] man,  
 Out of Egipt faste gan hym hie  
 Toward a contre callid Corozan,  
 With a ladi that hihte Cardigan, —  
 Thoruh his sotil fals[e] daliaunce  
 Be crafft he fill into hir aqueyntaunce.
- He wrouhte [so] be his enchaumentis  
 And be fals menis off nigromauncie,  
 Hir enclynyng toward his ententis;  
 For bothe he koude riht weel flatre\* & lie.  
 Saide openli that he was Messie,  
 Iewes abidyng vpon his comyng,  
 As grettest prophete and ther souereyn kyng.
- Thus the people he brouht in gret *error*  
 Bi his teching & his fals doctryne;  
 He wex among hem a gret *gouvernour*.  
 The saide ladi he dede also enclyne,  
 As to a prophete which that was deuyne  
 Sent from aboue, as she did vndirstonde;  
 For which she took hym vnto hir husbonde.
- His lynage [be]gan at Hismael;  
 Hadde a siknesse, fil\* ofte sithes doun,  
 In his excus[e] seide that Gabriel  
 Was sent to hym from the heuenli mansioun  
 Be the Hooli Goost to his instruccion:  
 For the aungel shewed hym\* so sheene,  
 To stonde upriht he myhte nat susteene.
- On his shuldre[s] wer ofte tymes seyn,  
 Whan he to folk[is] shewed his presence,  
 Milk whit doves, which that piked greyn  
 Out of his' eris; affermyng in sentence  
 Thei cam be grace of goostli influence  
 Hym to visite, to shewe & speciefie  
 He was the prophete that callid was Messie.
- Newe lawes he did also ordeyne,  
 Shewed signes be fals apparence;  
 Lik Moises, hymself he did[e] feyne

64 This cursed man then went to Khorasan with a lady named Khadija, who was attracted by his false subtle talk

72 and fooled by his necromancy; for he was an accomplished flatterer and liar.

76

80 He openly said he was Messiah, and became a great prophet among the people; and for that reason the lady married him.

84

[p. 408] He was an Ishmaelite and an epileptic, and excused his fits by saying, "I must always fall down when the Angel Gabriel comes to instruct me."

92 Milk-white doves sat on his shoulders, by spiritual influence, he claimed; but it was only to pick grain he had put in his ears.

96

100 He made new laws and feigned to be a prophet like Moses; and as

64. recorden B. 67. Coriozan P. 68. Cardigan P.  
 74. riht weel flatre] flatre weel B, J. 79. & and bi R.  
 82. a] om. H. 86. fil] ful B. 90. hym] hymself B.  
 92. shuldris R, R 3, H 5, shuldirs H, shuldre J, P.  
 93. folkis] folk R, H 5, folke P. 101. feyne] fyne H.

- an evidene of  
his powers he  
hung pots of  
milk and honey  
on the horns  
of a great bull,
- A prophete of most excellence.  
And therupon to shewe an evidence,  
Smale pottis with milk & hony born,  
Of a gret bole wer hangid on ech horn. 104
- symbolizing the  
plenty which  
was to come  
from his  
spiritual  
working.
- Made the peple yiue credulite  
To his doctryne and [his] froward teching:  
Be mylk & hony figurid was plente,  
Be the merit\* of his gostli werking. 108  
And thus he was at his begynnyng  
Take of Sarsyns, as thei gan to [hym] drawe,  
Which bi fals errour bond hem to his lawe. 112
- He soon  
converted the  
Saracens, and  
his clerk  
Sergius wrote  
down his laws  
and miracles.
- A clerk of his, callid Sergius,  
Wrot his lawes & thes myracles thre:  
First of the dowes, how thei cam to hym thus,  
As heer-toform rehersed was by me,  
How milk & hony wer tokne[s] of gret plente,  
And of the bole, afforn be crafft maad tame,  
Bi fals deceitis to getyn hym a name. 116
- He was made  
a prince of the  
Arabs and  
Turks, and  
collecting an  
army, made war  
on Heraclius  
and captured  
Alexandria.
- Of Arabiens & Sarsyns, as I reede,  
And of Turkis maad prince & gouernour,  
With Hismaelites & folk of Perse & Mede  
He gadred peple, gan wexe a werreieur,  
Ageyn Heraclius, the mihti emperour,  
And vsurped to ride in tho cuntres,  
Gat Alisaundre with many mo cites. 120
- Failing to  
become king,  
he said that  
he was sent  
to provide  
prophets to  
guide the  
people; and, as  
he was  
lecherous of  
heart, he set  
up an image of  
Venus.
- Of the parties desirous to be kyng,  
Of that purpos whan he was set aside,  
To the peple falsli dissymulyng,  
Told he was sent prophetis to prouide  
For tho contrees, for to been ther guide.  
And for he was lecherous of corage,  
He made of Venvs sette up an image. 128
- He made the  
Saracens wor-  
ship on Friday,  
just as the  
Jews do on  
Saturday, and  
told the peple  
to drink water,  
although he got  
drunk himself  
on good wine.
- Made Sarsyns to worshep the Friday,  
Semblabli his stori doth expresse,  
So as Iewes halwe the Satirday, —  
Al his werkis concludyng on falsnesse.  
Whan he drank wyn [he] fill in dronk[e]nesse;  
Bad the peple, lik a fals propheete,  
Drynk[e] watir, & good wyn to lete. 136

109. merit] meriht B.

111. hym] om. R, H 5 — Sarazyns J.

114. thes] his H. 129. dissymulyng] dissemblyng R.

- As I seide, the heretik Sergivs,  
 Witb hym of counsail froward & contrarie,  
 Foon to our feith, he and Nostorivs,  
 From hooli chirch[e] gretli thei gan varie. 144  
 On whos errours Bochas list nat tarie  
 Mor to write[n] of this Machomeete,  
 A nigromancien & a fals prophete.
- Who list to seen his lawes euerichon 148  
 Youe to Sarsyns, his book *can* ber witsesse,  
 As thei be set in his Alkeroun,  
 Echon in ordre groundid on falsnesse.  
 Lik a glotoun deied in dronk[e]nesse, 152  
 Bi excesse of mykil drynkyng wyn,  
 Fill in a podel, deuoured among swyn.
- This was the eende of fals[e] Machomeete,  
 For al his crafftis of nigromancie, 156  
 The funeral fyn of this seudo prophete,  
 Dronklew of kynde, callid hymself Messie,  
 Whom Sarsyns so gretli magnefie.  
 Iohn Bochas let be for a queen of Fraunce, 160  
 Mor of his errours to putte *in* remembraunce.

Bochas did not care to dwell on his errors or on those of the Nestorians; but all his false laws are to be seen in the Koran.

Finally, when drunk, he fell in a puddle and was devoured by hogs.

That was his end, for all his magic. John Bochas then turned to Brunhilde, a queen of France,

[How Brounchild / queene of Fraunce slouh hir kyn /  
 brought the londe in diuisioun, and aftir was  
 honged / and hewen in pecys smale.]<sup>1</sup>

- SHE *cam* arraied nothing lik a queen,  
 Hir her *vntressid*; Bochas took good heed,  
 In al his book he had afforn nat seen 164  
 A mor woful creature in deede.  
 Witb weeping eyen, totorn[e] was hir weede,  
 Rebuking Bochas, he had lefft behynde  
 Hir wrechidnesse for to putte *in* mynde. 168
- Vnto myn auctour she sodenli abraide, [p. 409]  
 Lik a woman that wer with wo chekmaat.  
 First of alle thus to hym she saide:  
 "Sumtyme I was a queen of gret estat 172  
 Crownid in Fraunce; but now al desolat  
 who came to him with dishevelled hair and torn garments and weeping eyes.  
 She said:  
 "Once I was a great queen;  
 but now I am desolate and almost ashamed to tell my woe.

144. thei] *om.* H. 157. pseudo H.

160. a queen of Fraunce] it did hym grevaunce H.

162-532 are omitted in H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 167 verso.

- I stonde in soth. Brunnechild[e] was my name,  
Which to reherse I haue a maner shame.
- Thou wer besi to write the woful caas 176  
Withynne thi book off Arsynoe,  
Dist seruise to queen Cleopatras,  
Of Rosymounde thou writ also parde;  
And among alle thou hast forgete me, 180  
Wherbi it seemeth thou dost at me disdeyne, —  
List no parcel to writen of my peyne.”
- Whan Bochas herd, of cheer he wex riht sad,  
Knowyng nothing of that she ded endure. 184  
“I-wis,” quod he, “afforn I haue nat rad  
In no cronicle nor in no scripture  
Of your woful froward auenture.”  
¶ “No?” quod she, “I pray you tak good heede, 188  
So as thei fille I wil reherse in deede.”
- Bochas with Brunnechilde gan debate anon:  
“Sothli,” quod he, “this the condicioun 192  
Of you wommen almost euerichon;  
Ye haue this maner, withoute excepcioun,  
Of your natural inclynacioun,  
Of your declaryng this obseruauunce to keepe:  
Nothyng to seyn contrarye to your worshepe. 196
- Nature hath tauht you al that is wrong texcuse,  
Vndir a courtyn al thyng for to hide;  
With litil greyn your chaff ye can abuse;  
On your diffautis ye list nat for to bide: 200  
The galle touchid, al that ye set aside;  
Shewe rosis fresshe; weedis ye leet passe,  
And fairest cheer[e] wher ye most trespace.
- And yiff ye shal telle your owne tale, 204  
How ye be fall[e] fro Fortunis wheel,  
Ye will vnclose but a litil male,  
Shewe of your vices but a smal parcel:  
Brotil glas sheweth brihter than doth steel; 208  
And thouth of vertu ye shewe a fair pretence,  
He is a fool that yiueth to you credence.”

174. Brunchildis R, Brounchilde J, Brunkildys R 3, Brunchildys H 5, Brunichilde P.

180. forgotyn R, forgotten J. 188. you] the R.

200. On] Onto R — fortabide R.

203. fairest] faireth R.



- ¶ Quo[d] Brunnechild, "I do riht weel espie  
 Thou hast of wommen a fals oppynyoun,  
 How that thei can flatre weel & lie  
 And been dyuers of disposicioun; —  
 Thou myhtest haue maad an excepcioun  
 Of hih estatis & them that gentil been,  
 Namli of me, that was so gret a queen." 212
- ¶ "Your hih estat boff Kynde hath no poweer  
 To chaunge in nature nouthor cold nor heete:  
 But let vs passe and leue this mateer,  
 Theron tabide or any mor to plete;  
 Of your compleynt seith to me the grete.  
 Be weie of seruise to you I shal me quite,  
 As ye declare take my penne & write." 220
- ¶ "Tak heed," quod she, "& with riht good auis  
 Fro the trouthe bewar that thou nat varie!  
 Whilom in France regnid kyng Clowis,  
 Hadde a sone that namyd was Clotarye,  
 Clothair an heir which callid was Lotarie;  
 And this Lotarie, namyd the secounde,  
 Hadde sonis foure, in stori it is founde." 228
- To the cronicle who can taken heed,  
 As it is Iput in remembraunce,  
 Whan ther fadir, the myhti kyng, was ded,  
 Atween thes foure partid was al France,  
 Ech be hymself[e] to haue gouernaunce,  
 Be oon assent, as brothir onto brothir,  
 Weryng her crownis, ech quit hem onto othir." 232
- The same tyme, I, callid Brunnechild, —  
 Me list nat varie fro the old wrytyng, —  
 Hadde a fadir namyd Leuychild,  
 Of al Spayne souereyn lord and kyng.  
 My saide fathir, to ful gret hyndryng  
 Of bothe rewmys (the fame ronne ful\* ferre),  
 Tween Spaigne & Fraunce gan a mortal werre." 240
- The brethre foure, in Fraunce crownid kynges,  
 Ageyn my fadir made strong diffence,  
 Of marcial pride & fortunat chaungyngis, 248
- Said Brunhilde,  
 "I see you  
 have a false  
 opinion of  
 women; but  
 you might have  
 made an  
 exception of  
 me. I was a  
 great queen."
- "Your high  
 estate cannot  
 alter your  
 nature,"  
 answered  
 Bochas; "but  
 I'll not argue.  
 I'll not argue.  
 Tell me your  
 complaint and  
 I will write  
 it down."
- "Be sure you  
 write the  
 truth," said  
 she. "Once  
 there was a  
 king in France  
 named Clovis,  
 and the  
 kingdom was  
 divided  
 amongst  
 his four great-  
 grandchildren."
- "I was the  
 daughter of  
 Athanagild,  
 king of  
 Spain, who  
 unfortunately  
 began a war  
 on France."
- "The four  
 brothers  
 made a  
 strong  
 defence,

227. Clowis] Cloduice P.

229. an] had an R, R 3.

241. leuygilde R.

244. full] so B, J, P.

Whan thei mette be mortal violence,  
 Of sodeyn slauhtre fill suich pestilence  
 On outhert parti, the feeld lik a gret flood  
 With the terrible effusioun of blood. 252

and finally to  
 have peace I  
 was given in  
 marriage to  
 Sigebert, then  
 reigning in  
 France."

To bothe reumys the werris wer importable, [p. 410]  
 Causid of deth[e] passyng gret damage;  
 Souhte menys, wex be assent tretable,  
 Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 256  
 Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage  
 To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce,  
 Tween bothe rewmys to maken alliaunce."

"No, no," said  
 Bochas, "that  
 isn't so; we  
 are not going  
 to agree.  
 You were first  
 the wife of  
 Chilperic.  
 The chronicles  
 say so."

¶ "Nay, nay," quod Bochas, "I deeme it is 260  
 nat so;

Tween you & me ther mut begynne a striff.  
 Beth auised; taketh good heed herto:  
 The first assuraunce of mariage in your lyff,  
 Of Chilperik ye wer the weddid wiff, 264  
 Cronicles seyn, what-euer ye expresse,  
 In this mateer wil bere with me witesse."

"Although some  
 books have it  
 as you mention,  
 at any rate  
 I was given  
 when very  
 young to  
 Sigebert.

¶ "Thouh summe bookis reherse so & seyn, 268  
 Lik as ye haue maad heer mencion,

Ther rehersaile stant in noun certeyn;  
 For be thassent of outhert regioun,  
 Spayne and Fraunce in ther conuencioun  
 Ordeyned so in my tendre age, 272  
 To Sigibert I was youe in mariage.

"It was an  
 unhappy  
 marriage:  
 Hymenæus  
 was not there,  
 and Tisiphone  
 and her sisters  
 bore the  
 torches;

Ymenivs was nat ther present,  
 Whan we took our chaumbre toward niht;  
 For Thesiphone, hir sustren of assent, 276  
 Infernal goddassis bar the torchis liht.  
 And as the torchis shewid dirk or briht,  
 Therbi the peple present, oon & alle,  
 Dempte of the mariage what sholde befall. 280

and of  
 old times,  
 according as  
 the torches  
 burnt dark or  
 bright, the  
 marriage was  
 deemed  
 fortunate or  
 otherwise.

This custum vsid of antique:  
 Fro ther templis of goddis & goddassis,  
 At mariages of folk of hih degre  
 Torchis wer born, of whom men took witnessis, 284  
 As thei wer dirk or shewed ther brihtnessis,  
 The difference seyn in ech estat,  
 Yif it wer toward or infortunat.

- Of this mariage short processe for to make, 288 "At my marriage the torches gave out heavy black smoke and turned the light to darkness.
- The torchis brente, & yit thei wer nat briht, —  
Shewed out komerous smokes blake;  
Of consolacioun lost was al the liht.  
Thus in dirknesse wastid the firste niht: 292
- Ther vers, ther songis of goddis & goddessis  
Wer al togidre of sorwe and heuynessis.
- Thes wer the toknis the niht of mariage,  
Pronostiques of gret aduersite; 296 "Such were the prognostics, although I was very beautiful and arrayed like a queen.
- Yit of nature I hadde this auantage  
Of womanheed and excellent beute;  
And lik a queen in stonis & perre  
I was arraied, clad in purpil red, 300
- With* a crowne of gold upon myn hed.
- Solempneli crownid queen of Fraunce,  
Which for to seen folk faste gan repaire.  
Of al weelfare I hadde suffisaunce, 304 "I had a son named Clotaire by Sigebert, the third of the name crowned in France;
- Clomb of Fortune ful hih vpon the staire.  
A sone I hadde, which callid was Clotaire,  
Be Sigibert, be record of writyng,  
Thridde of þat name in Fraunce crownid kyng. 308
- So wolde God the\* day whan he was born  
He hadde be put in his sepulture,  
In sauacioun of blood shad heer-toforn:  
Caused the deth of many creature, 312 but would to God he had been put in his sepulchre the day he was born, for he was the cause that many a man died."
- As dyuers bookis recorden in scripture,  
Ground and gynnyng, as maad is mencion,  
Withynne this lond of gret deuysioun.
- He with his brethre, of whom I tolde late, 316 "Not so," said Bochas, "who was chief cause of this dissension?"  
At hym begonne the first occasioun" —  
¶ "Nat so," quod Bochas, "ye failen of your date.  
Who was cheef cause of [this] discencioun?"  
¶ "Sothli," quod she, "to myn oppynyoun, 320 "Really," she replied, "I think it was fraternal jealousy."  
Amon[g] hem-silff, I dar weel specefe,  
The cheef gynnyng was fraternal envie."
- ¶ "Keep you mor cloos; in this mateer ye faille.  
Folwyng the traxis of your condicioun, 324 "Be careful, you are not telling the truth. You yourself were chief cause."  
Ye halte foule in your rehersaille:  
For of your owne imagynacioun  
Ye sewe the seed of this discencioun

298. womanhode R. 309. the] that B — whan] that J, om. P.  
311. here befor R.

Among thes kynges, yif ye taken heed, 328  
Bi which in France many man was ded."

At this Brunhilde changed her expression and grimly said to Bochas, "A few moments ago you knew very little about my life; now you sit over me as a judge.

¶ Than Brunnechild[e] gan to chaunge cheere;  
To Bochas seide with face ful cruel,  
"Nat longe agon thou knew nat the maneer 332  
Of my lyuyng but a smal parcel;  
Me seemeth now thou knowest euerideel,  
So that ye may withoute lenger striff  
Sitte as a iuge, that knowe so weel my lyff. 336

"When these brothers were at discord, Chilperic, brother of King Siebert, was slain,

Whan thes brethre stoden at discord, [p. 411]  
Ech ageyn other bi mortal violence,  
Vndir colour to tretyn of accord  
With a maner feyned dilligence, 340  
Chilperik ther beyng in presence,  
Whilom brothir to Sigibert the kyng,  
Was slayn among hem be fals conspiryng.

and also Siebert, who sought to avenge his death."

On whos deth auengid for to be, 344  
As Sigibert did[e] hymself auauunce,  
Among the pres he slay[e]n was parde . . ."

"No," said Bochas, "he was murdered because of your deceit and evil life.

[¶] "Nat so," quod Bochas, "but of fals gouernaunce,  
Of your mysleuyng fill this vnhappi chaunce, 348  
That Sigibert was moordred in sothnesse  
Oonli be occasioun of your doubilnesse.

"You loved another, and through your outrage and folly the king was slain while hunting in the Forest of Compiègne."

Folwyng the traces\* of newefangilnesse,  
Geyn Sigibert ye wrouht[e] ful falsli, 352  
Whan ye loued\* of froward doubilnesse  
Landrik the erl of Chaumpayne & of Bry;  
For bi your outrage & your gret foly  
The kyng was slay[e]n, and ye did assente, 356  
In a forest on huntynge whan he wente,

"Alas," she exclaimed, "Bochas, Bochas, you know too much; but how do you know about the slaughter of Siebert, done by my assent, if you were not there?"

Which callid was the forest of Compyne."  
¶ "Alas!" quod she, brak out in compleynyng,  
"Bochas, Bochas, thou dost sore vndermyne 360  
Alle the surfetis doon in my lyuyng!  
Thou knowest the slauhtre of Sigibert the king,  
Which that was wrouht, alas, be myn assent, —  
How knowist thou it, that wer nat ther present? 364

329. many a R.

334. eueri] eueril R.

346. the pres] thres R.

351. traces] tras B, trace R, traces J, P.

353. loued] loueden B R.

- Of thes debatis and of al this werre,  
 With rebukis rehersed heer in veyn,  
 In rehersaille gretli thou dost erre;  
 For which I caste — be riht weel certeyn — 368  
 In my diffence to replie ageyn.  
 It was nat I; for she that thou dost meene  
 Was Fredegundus, the lusti yonge queene.
- This Fredegunde, thou shalt [weel] vndirstonde, 372  
 Riht womanli and fair of hir visage, —  
 Chilperik was whilom hir husbonde;  
 For hir beute took hir in mariage.  
 Bi hir treynys & hir gret outrage 376  
 He was aftir, the stori who list reede,  
 At myscheef slayn; thou shalt so fynde in deede.”
- ¶ “Thouh ye be langage make strong diffence  
 In thes mateeres, which cause me to muse, 380  
 I haue ageyn you lost my pacience,  
 That so sotilli wolde yoursilf excuse.  
 Contrariouly your termys ye abuse;  
 For Clotaire\*, I haue so rad, parde, 384  
 Was nat engendred of Sigibert nor of the.
- I remembre ful weel that I haue rad  
 That Childepert\*, thouh ye therat disdeyne, —  
 Record of auctours that prudent been & sad, — 388  
 How he in trouthe was gendrid of you tweyne,  
 Which in his deyng (me list nat for to feyne\*)  
 Leftt sonis two, the story ye may\* reede, —  
 Theobart & Thederik to succede.” 392
- ¶ “Bochas,” quod she, “thouh thou turne vp-so-doun  
 Thes said[e] stories, rehersed heer in deede,  
 Folwyng of malis thyn own\* oppynyoun,  
 Maugre thi wil[le], foorth I wil proceede 396  
 As I began; tak therto good heede:  
 First Theodorik, thou shalt vndirstonde,  
 Cosyn germyn was to myn husbonde,

“You are wholly wrong. It was not I, but the lusty young Queen Fredegond whom you mean.

“Chilperic was once her husband, and it was through her wiles and outrages that he was afterwards slain.”

“Although you defend yourself well, I’ve lost patience with you for your subtle excuses.

“Clotaire was not your own son nor Sigibert’s, but Childepert was; and he left two sons, Theudebert and Theuderich.”

“Bochas, although you turn these stories upside down out of malice, I will go on as I began, in spite of you.

365. al] *om.* R.

371. Fredegundis R, R 3, Fredegundys J, H 5 — Was] It was J, P.

372. weel] *om.* J.

384. Clotaire] Colotaire B, Colotaire J, Colatayre H 5.

387. Childepert] Chilperik B, Chilperike P.

390. feyne] seyne B. 391. may] do B.

395. of malis thyn own] the malis of thyn B.

397. therto] heer to R, herto H 5.

- "Theuderich was cousin german to my husband, and he slew his brother Theudebert and all his family. Whatever you say, this is the truth." Kyng of Burgoyne that tyme, and non other. 400  
 He of hatreede and indignacioun  
 Slouh Theobart, which that was his brother,  
 His wiff, his childre, for short conclusioun,  
 Which in the myhti famous regioun 404  
 Of Autrasie regnid as lord & kyng.  
 What-euer thou seist, this soth & no lesyng."
- "No," said Bochas, "it was quite otherwise. I cannot let you go on in this way. Whether you like it or not, you caused Theudebert's death." ¶ "Nay," quod Bochas, "it was al otherwise; I may nat suffre how ye go ther among. 408  
 Al this langage of newe that ye devise,  
 Brouht to a preef, concludeth vpon wrong.  
 What sholde we lenger this mateer drawe along?  
 Yoursilf wer cause, wher ye be lothe\* or fayn, 412  
 Be Theodorik that Theobart was slayn.
- "And it was all because of your burning covetousness to rule the country yourself." The ground heerof gan parcel of envie,  
 Bi your froward brennyng couetise,  
 Which that ye hadde onli to occupie, 416  
 To reule the lond aftir your owne guise.  
 And yif I shal pleyntli heer devise  
 Of thes myscheeuys rehersed, God do boote,  
 Ye wer your-silff[e] ground, cheef cropp & roote." 420
- Said Brunhilde, "I see you have lost all your reverence for me and only want to shew your cruelty." ¶ Quod Brunnechild, "I conceyue wel & se, [p. 412] Ye for your part haue lost al reuerence,  
 Your-silf enarmed to shewe your cruelte  
 Ageyn[e]s me, touchyng the violence 424  
 Of too slauhtris rehersed in sentence:  
 First how Theodorik his brothir slouh in deede,  
 Callid Theobart, a pitous thyng to reede;
- "Afterwards Theuderich was himself poisoned and his wife and children slaughtered." Hym-silff[e] aftir stranglid with poisoun, 428  
 His wiff, his childre hewe on pecis smale . . ."
- "Some of this is true, but not all. You had better grow pale for shame; you slew them yourself." ¶ "As ye," quod Bochas, "mak heer mencioniun,  
 Sum part is trewe, but nat al your tale;  
 For I suppose ye sholde wexe pale 432  
 For shame of thyng which ye canat excuse,  
 Whan Theodorik begynneth you taccuse.
- He put on you the crym of fals tresoun;  
 Ye slouh his wiff and his childryn also; 436  
 Hym-silf also ye moordred with poisoun:

405. Autrasie] Austriche P. 410. concludyng R.

412. lothe] leef B, wroth R, R 3, H 5.

419. do] to R, be H 5.

427. Theobart] Theodobert R,

H 5, Theodobart R 3, Theobert P.

435. on] vpon R.

- I wolde wete what ye can seyn herto?"  
 ¶ "Alas," quod she, "alas, what shal I do!  
 Was neuer woman, in hih nor louh estat,  
 Al thyng considred, mor infortunat!  
 Fortune of me set now but litil prys,  
 Bi hir froward furious violence  
 Turnyng hir wheel & visage of malys,  
 Causeth to me that no man yeueth credence,  
 Had in despiht, void of al reuerence,  
 And thoruh Fortunys mutabilite  
 Sool [and] abiect and falle in pouerte.  
 ¶ O Bochas Iohn, for short conclusioun,  
 Thou must ageyns me þi stile now auance.  
 I haue disserued to haue punicioun,  
 And alle the princis & barouns now in France  
 Crie out on me & axe on me vengauce;  
 Refuge is non nor recure in this thing,  
 Thouth that Clotaire my sone\* be crownid kyng.  
 For my defaultis foul & abhomynable,  
 Tofor the iuges of al the parlement  
 I was foriugid & founde also coupable,  
 Of euery crym convict be iugement,  
 Myn accusours ther beyng present,  
 Of oon & othir stondyng a gret route,  
 Markid with fyngris of folk þat stood aboute.  
 For verray shame I did myn eyen close,  
 For them that gaured & cast on me þer siht;  
 But as folk may be toknys weel suppose,  
 Myn eris wer nat stoppid half ariht.  
 Taken be force & lad forth with myht,  
 Be the hangman drawe ouer hill & vale,  
 Dismembrid aftir & hewe on pecis smale.  
 With my blood the pament al bespreynt,  
 Thanked be Fortune, such\* was myn auenture,  
 The soule partid, my bodi was so feynt.  
 Who radde euer of any creature  
 That mor wo or torment did endure!" —

"Alas," said she, "what shall I do! Was there ever a more unfortunate woman!"

"Fortune cares little for me now; she allows no man to believe what I say, or to hold me in respect, — abject and alone and fallen in poverty!"

"O Bochas John, I have deserved punishment and there is no refuge for me, though my son be crowned king."

"I was found guilty by the judges of all the parliament; and people pointed me out with their fingers, so that I shut my eyes for very shame."

"Taken out by force, I was drawn by the hangman and cut up into small pieces."

"Who ever read of a woman who endured more torment than I."

438. herto] therto R.

448. and] om. J.

453. 2nd on] of R.

455. Clotaire my sone] with Clotaire my soule B, R, J.

461. a] ther a R.

470. pament] paument R, pavment R 3, payvment H 5.

471. such] which B, J, P.

Praied Bochas to haue al thyng in mynde,  
Write hir lyff & leue nothyng behynde. 476

## Lenvoye.

The tragedy of Brunhilde is froward and grievous to read. She was deceitful and an instigator of treason.

**T**HIS tragedie of Brunnechild the queen,  
To hir stori who list yiue attendaunce,  
Froward to reede, contagious to seen,  
And contrarie to al good gouernaunce, 480  
Born in Spayne, crownid queen of Fraunce,  
Double of hir tunge, vpfynder of tresoun,  
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuisioun.

No man could escape her wiles; mistress of murder and dissension.

From hir treynys ther koude no man fleene, 484  
Sours & hedspryng of sorwe & myschaunce;  
Shad hony first, stang aftir as doon beene,  
Hir myrre medlid with sugrid fals plesaunce.  
What she saide includid variaunce, 488  
Maistresse of moordre & of discencioun,  
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuisioun.

The princes of Gaul could not stand her outrages and excesses, which almost brought their country to ruin.

Princis of Gaule myhte nat susteene  
Gret outrages nor the gret gouernaunce 492  
Nor the surfetis doon in hir yeeris greene,  
Brouht that kyngdam almost to vttraunce;  
Alle of assent cried on hir vengauce.  
The fame aroos, how al that regioun 496  
Bi hir falsnesse stood at dyuisioun.

The knife of murder was ground keen by her malice; she spared neither her kin nor her friends.

The knyff of moordre grounde was so keene  
Bi hir malys of long contynuaunce,  
Hir corage fret with infernal teene, 500  
Spared nouter kyn nor alliaunce.  
Peised hir surfetis & weied in ballaunce,  
As Bochas writ, she was thoccaseioun  
Which made al Fraunce stonde at dyuisioun. 504

¶ Here Bochas in maner excusith the [p. 413]  
vorrching of Brunnechild.<sup>1</sup>

**B**OCHAS astonid, gan inwardli meruaile,  
Fill in a maner of ambiguite  
Of Brunnechildis merueilous rehersaile, —

486. doon] *om.* R. 492. outrages] greuauces R.

<sup>1</sup> The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 169 recto: "Bochas mervelyng of the malice and cruelte of Bronnchild/writeth thus."



How any woman of resoun sholde be  
So ful of malis & froward\* cruelte,  
To slen hir kyn & setten at distaunce  
Be dyuysioun al the rewme of France.

508 Bochas  
marvelled  
how any  
woman could  
be so full of  
malice and per-  
verse cruelty.

Bochas dempte it was nat credible  
That a woman sholde be so vengable,  
In hir malis so venymous or terrible  
Of slauhtre or moordre [for] to be coupable.  
The stori suspect, heeld it but a fable,  
Onli except that she did hym excite  
With gret instaunce hir story for to write.

512 He thought it  
incredible that  
a woman  
should be so  
terrible in her  
rage as to be  
guilty of  
murder.

516

Hir cry on Bochas was verray importune,  
To sette in ordre hir felicites  
With hir vnhappi chaunges of fortune,  
Hir disclaundres and gret aduersites,  
With hir diffame reportid in\* contres;  
No verray grounde founde in bookes olde,  
But of confessioun that she hirsiluen tolde,

He held her  
story but a  
fable, except  
for her  
insistence;  
and it came  
not from old  
books but was  
her own  
confession.

520

524

That myn auctour with\* solempne stile  
Reherse sholde hir deedis disclaundrous,  
Hir flouryng yeeris also to compile,  
Medlid with hir daies that wer contrarious,  
Hir fatal eende froward & furious, —  
Wherof encoumbred of verray weerynesse,  
Toward Eracliyus he gan his penne dresse.

And finally,  
overcome by  
very weariness,  
he turned his  
pen to the  
Emperor  
Heraclius.

528

532

[How Eracliyus the Emperour sustened heresy fill  
in to dropsy and sikenesse incurabl and so  
died.]<sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR Phocas, with gret honour & glorie  
Crownid emperour of Roome þe cite,  
In whos tyme, lik as seith þe storie,  
The Romeyns stood in gret perplexite  
Bi them of Perse that roos with Cosdroe,  
Which took upon hym to be lord and sire,  
As a tiraunt to trouble the empire.

After Phocas  
became  
emperor  
the Romans  
were greatly  
embarrassed by  
the Persians  
under  
Chosroes,

536

509. froward] of B. 515. or] and J — for] om R.

523. in] be B, by J. 525. confessions R.

526. with] rehersed with B, J. 533. H begins again.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 169 verso.

- who conquered  
 many provinces  
 in Asia, and,  
 froward to  
 Christ,  
 besieged  
 Jerusalem, until  
 Heraclius  
 smote off his  
 head.
- Gat many prouynce & many famous rewm 540  
 Thoruh al Asie, as the cronicle seith,  
 Gan approche toward Iherusalem;  
 Afforn the toun proudli a siege he leith,  
 As a tiraunt froward to Cristes feyth. 544  
 But Eraclius, maugre al his miht,  
 Smet of his hed & slouh hym lik a knyht.  
 And bi grace, which that is dyuyne,  
 This famous prync, this Eraclius 548  
 In his begynning slouh many proud Sarseyn,  
 Holde in tho daies notable & glorious,  
 And in his conquest passyng[ly] famous.  
 Dyuers reliques & the cros he souhte, 552  
 And fro tho cuntres many of hem he brouht.
- In his youth  
 Heraclius slew  
 many Saracens,  
 and was a  
 famous knight  
 and a seeker  
 after relics.
- Was non so famous holde in his daies  
 As Eraclius thempire for to guye,  
 Nor mor manli founde at al assaies 556  
 Of hih prowesse nor in cheualrye.  
 But whan he gan susteene heresie,  
 God took from hym, *witbynne* a litil space,  
 His hap, his weelfare, his fortune & his grace. 560
- and upheld the  
 doctrines of the  
 Monarchianites.  
 After that he  
 was never  
 fortunate.
- He gan susteene & folwe certeyn rihtis,  
 Of wilfulnesse and froward fantasie,  
 Of a sect callid Monachelites,  
 Which is a sect of froward heresie; 564  
 And sith that he drouh to that partie,  
 The stori tellith, for al his hih estat,  
 This Eraclius was neuere fortunat.
- Once dreaded  
 on land and  
 sea, Grace and  
 Fortune left  
 him, and he  
 suffered with  
 such a dropsy  
 that his thirst  
 could never be  
 quenched.
- Wher he was first drad on se & lond, 568  
 Namli off Sarsyns, for his\* cheualrie,  
 Grace & Fortune from hym *withdrouh* ther hond;  
 For whan that he fill into heresie,  
 He was trauailed with suich a dropesie, 572  
 And therwithal he hadde a froward lust  
 Euere to drynk, & euere he was a-thrust.  
 In tho daies founde was no leche,  
 Al-be that thei wer souht on ech partie, 576  
 The saide prync that koude wissch or teche,

549. begynning] *gynnyng* H. 551. passyngly] *passyng*  
 J, R, H 5, P. 553. tho] *pe* H.  
 558. to susteen H, to sustene R 3.  
 568. first drad] *drad first* H, R 3. 569. for] *for al* B, J.  
 576. that] *though* H — *on*] in R, R 3.

Hym to releue of his idropesie,  
 Maad feynt & feeble with a gret palisie:  
 Thus in siknesse he hath his daies spent,  
 Be vengauce slayn with infernal torment. 580

Of Heraclius this was the woful eende, [p. 414]  
 As is rehersed, slay[e]n with seeknesse,  
 Out of this world[e] whan he sholde weende, 584  
 Al hool thempire stood in gret distresse,  
 Force of Sarsyns dide hem so oppresse;  
 And day be day drouh [vn]to declyn  
 Be his successour callid Constantyn, 588

No physician  
 was able to  
 relieve him,  
 and he finally  
 died in  
 torment.

That was his  
 sad end; and  
 all the empire  
 stood in  
 distress  
 because of the  
 Saracens.

[How Constantyne the sone of Eraclius supportyng  
 error and heresy was moordred in a stewe.]<sup>1</sup>

Which was his sone, as maad is mencionn.  
 In whos tyme thoruh his gret folie  
 Sarsyns dide gret oppressioun,  
 Spoillyng the contres of al Lumbardie. 592  
 And Constantyn, of wilful slogardie,  
 Wasted his daies til that he hath brouht  
 Al thempire almost onto nouht.

Geyn Cristes feith in especial 596  
 He gan of malys his wittis to applie,  
 And was therto enemy ful mortal,  
 As\* cheeff supportour of fals heresie.  
 And toward Roome faste he gan hym hie, 600  
 Spoiled templeis of many riche image,  
 And be water took aftir his passage.

To Constantynople he hasted hym ful blyue,  
 Be Cecile the weie was most\* meete;  
 At Siracuse I fynde he did aryue, 604  
 And for the sesoun was excessiff of heete,  
 Which in his labour made hym for to sueete,  
 And secreli he gan hymself renewe 608  
 To be bathed in a preue stewe.

His son  
 Constantine  
 succeeded; and  
 during his  
 reign the  
 Saracens did as  
 they would,

while he  
 wasted his  
 days, an enemy  
 to Christ's  
 faith, until the  
 empire was  
 almost brought  
 to nought.

He hastened  
 from Rome to  
 Constantino-  
 ple, and stop-  
 ping over at  
 Syracuse,  
 where  
 it was very  
 hot, secretly  
 went to a  
 brothel for  
 a bath;

578. dropesie R, J. 581. torment] Iugement H.  
 583. is] om. R. 595 is misplaced at foot of column R.  
 596. Geyn] All R. 599. As] And B, J — fals] all H.  
 603. To] om. H, R 3 — ful] om. H, H 5.  
 604. Be] To — most] almost B, R, J, H 5.  
 607. hym] his H. 608. renewe] renewe H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 169 verso.

- and there  
his own  
knights fell  
upon him and  
slew him.
- Of enmyte ther he was espied;  
His owne knihtes, lik as it is founde,  
Be conspiracioun, certeyn of them allied, 612  
Fill upon hym with sha[r]p<sup>e</sup> swerdis\* grounde.  
And merciles, with many mortal wounde,  
Thei slouh hym ther, on hym thei wer so wood,  
Amyd the stewe, nakid as he stood. 616
- They chose  
their own  
emperor; but  
Constantine,  
the next heir,
- Aftir whos deth thei did hemsilf auance  
To chese a kniht bor[e]n in Armenye,  
Of thempire to take\* the gouernaunce  
And to supporte falsli ther partie. 620  
¶ But Constantyn, succeedyng of allie,  
Beyng next heir, the trouthe for to sue,  
To hym that was moordred in the stue,
- a notable man,  
who was wiser  
than his father,  
slew all the  
conspirators.
- Callid Constantyn, as his fadir was, 624  
Riht notable in actis marciall,  
Mor wisli gouerned, stood in othir caas:  
Lik a prince, be iugement roial,  
Of manli herte and corage natural 628  
The conspiratours first of alle he sleth,  
That wer assentid to his fadris deth.
- To his great  
renown he  
caused 289  
bishops to  
assemble for  
the defence  
of Christ's  
faith against  
old heresies.
- To gret ences of his famous renoun,  
Grace of God dide hym enlumyne, 632  
Constantynople, in that roial toun  
Olde heresie[s] to cessen and to fyne.  
Too hundrid bisshoppis [eihty] & eek nyne  
He made assemble, thoruh manli prouidence,\* 636  
Of Cristes feith to stonde at diffence.\*
- He also  
restored  
churches  
and justly  
punished all  
heretics, with-  
out respect of  
person or  
favour.
- He was eek besi cherchis to restore,  
Al heretikes manli to withstonde,  
Ther oppynyouns examyned weel before, 640  
And whan the trouthe was weel vndirstonde,  
Lik Cristis kniht list for no man wonde  
To pun[ys]shen hem ius[t]li be rigour,  
Withoute excepcioun of persone or fauour. 644
- I read little  
more about  
him in Bochas
- Of hym in Bochas litil mor I reede,  
Nor of his empire I fynde non oþer date, —  
Spared non heretik, nouthur for gold nor meede,

613. swerdis] speris B, sperys J. 619. to take] took B,  
J, toke P. 623. was moordred] moordrid was H.  
631. famous] fadris R. 635. eihty] om. J — eek] eke also J.  
The second halves of lines 636, 37 are transposed B, J, P.  
647. nor] no H.

Constantynople he passid into fate; 648 except that he  
Whan Bulgarience gan with hym debate, paid tribute to  
A froward peepel, wilful & rekles, the Bulgars  
Gaff hem a tribut, he for to lyue in pes. for the sake  
of peace and  
died in Con-  
stantinople.

[How Gisulphus was slayn, and his wif ended  
mischeuesly in lecherye.]<sup>1</sup>

NEXT cam Gisulphus to Bochas on þe ryng, 652 Gisulf and his  
A famous duk & notable in his lyff, wife Romilda  
With weeping eyen pitousli pleynyng, lived always in  
With whom also cam Rymulde his wiff, sorrow and  
Which þat lyueden euere in sorwe & striff. 656 strife, although  
Yit was she bothe of berthe & of lynage she was of an  
Riht excellent, & fair of hir visage. excellent  
family and  
very beautiful.

Sixe childre hadde this famous queen They had six  
Bi Gisulphus begetyn in mariage, 660 children, who  
Wonder semli and goodli on to seen, were at first  
And fortunat be processe of ther age, happy in spite  
Al-be ther fadir felte gret damage of their father's  
Be the werris he hadde in his lyuyng 664 wars with  
With Cathanus that was of Narroys kyng. Cakanus, King  
of the Avars,

This Cathanus with many strong bataille [p. 415] who slew Gisulf  
Is descendid, and took the weie riht and conquered  
Of duk Gisulphus the londis to assaile; 668 all his land.  
Togidre mette in steel armyd briht;  
Gisulphus slayn; his peepel put to fliht.  
And Cathanus with strong & myhti hond  
Took pecessioun, conquered al his lond. 672

Aftir whos deth Romulde the duchesse, Romilda  
Gretli astoned, pale of hir visage, retired with  
To the castel off Forgoil gan hir dresse her knights to  
With hir knihtis of strong & fel corage. 676 the castel of  
Cathanus made aftir his\* passage, Foroianum;  
Leide a siege, caste hym to iupart  
His lyff, his bodi rather than departe.

649. Bulgariens R, H, R 3. 655. Romilda P.

663. felte] fell in R. 664. the] ther R.

665. Cathanus] Cathamus J, Cathernoys H, Cakanus P—Nar-  
roys] Bauars P.

673. Rymulde H, J, Romilde P.

676. hir] his R. 677. his] hir B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 170a.

- and as she stessd on the wall and saw Cacus riding about in armour
- About the castel armyd as he rood, 680  
 Lik a prince sat knihtli on his steede,  
 Vpon the wallis as Romuldu stood,  
 Fresshli beseyn[e] in hir purpil weede,  
 And of the seege gan to taken heede, 684  
 Hir look, vnwarli, as she cast a-side,  
 And sauh the kyng tofor the castel ride,
- and looking like a prince and manly knight, she fell in love with him,
- So lik a prince and a manli kniht;  
 She gan on hym looke wondir narwe: 688  
 The god of loue persed thoruh hir siht,  
 Vnto hir herte markid hir with his arwe;  
 The firy tyndis of his brennyng harwe  
 Made the soil so pliaunt of hir thouht, 692  
 That of hir castel she set almost riht nouht.
- and, agreeing to yield the castle, presented herself to him in his tent.
- And for tacomplishe the hool entencioun  
 Of hir fals lust in al maner thyng,  
 She is agreed be composicioun 696  
 To yeeld the castel in haste onto the kyng,  
 She for to come withoute mor tarieng,  
 Lik a duchesse hirsiluen to presente,  
 Wher-as the kyng sat armyd in his tente. 700
- Her people were taken prisoner, her four sons fled. Cacus lay with her one night and then despised her.
- The peple withynne prisoneeres take,  
 Hir foure sonis took hem to the fliht;  
 Loue caused that she hath forsake  
 Hir blood, hir kyn, wher it wer wrong or riht. 704  
 And Romulde the space but of\* a niht  
 With Cathanus hadde al hir deliht,  
 And euere aftir he hadde hir in despiht.
- Repulsed by the king, she cohabited with twelve men of his household and afterwards sank so low as to be acquainted with the grooms of the stable
- And bi the kyng whan she was refusid, 708  
 Tuelue in noubre that duelled in his hous  
 Most frowardli hir beute haue abusid,  
 Of hir nature she was so lecherous.  
 Al to reherse it is contagious, 712  
 How she wex aftir so abhomynable  
 To been aqueynted with gromys of þe stable.  
 It wer but veyn to tarie on this mateere  
 Or any long processe for to make, 716  
 Hir stori is contagious [for] to heere.

682. Rymuldis H — Romuldu stood] Rymuldu abood J, Romilde abode P.

691. firy tyndis] fire teyndis R. 693. nouht] om. R.

698. withoute] with R. 705. but of] of al B, J.

715. on] in R, H, R 3, H 5.

But fynalli at myscheef she was take,  
 For a spectacle fischched on a stake,  
 Set up alofte, myn auctour tellith so, 720  
 Deide in distresse for constreynt of hir wo.

It is a foul story; and finally she was impaled on a stake and died.

[Off Iustynyan the fals extorcioner exiled by Patry-  
 cyan/after bothe nose & eien kut from his hede.]<sup>1</sup>

**B**Y example, so as fressh armure  
 Thoruh long[e] resting leseth his brihtnesse,  
 Fret *with* old rust, gadreth gret ordure, 724  
 Is diffacid of his fressh cleernesse,  
 Semblabli the Romeyns hih prowessse  
 Gan for tappalle, alas, & that was routhe! —  
 Whan thei hem gaff to negligence & slouthe. 728

Just as new armour if unused becomes tarnished, so the Romans lost their prowess when they grew slothful.

Who in kniethod list haue experience  
 Must eschewe riotous idilnesse,  
 Be proudent *with* enteer dilligence,  
 Large *with* discrecioun, manli with gentillesse, 732  
 To hih emprises his corage dresse,  
 And be weel war, upon ech partie,  
 Hym to preserue fro rust of slogardie.

Knights must avoid riotous idleness and keep themselves from the rust of indolence.

The which[e] vice gretli hath appeired, 736  
 As is remembrid of old antiquite,  
 Caused ofte Romeyns be dispeired,  
 Be froward lustis hyndred ther cite  
 And appallid ther old prosperite; 740  
 For which defautis cam to pleyne blyue  
 To Iohn Bochas emperour[e]s fyue.

It was this vice that hurt the prosperity of Rome; and five emperors and five kings came to Bochas to complain their sloth.

As many kynges of the same noumbre,  
 Which be slouthe wern afforn oppressid, 744  
 Whom that slouthe whilom did encoumbre,  
 Ther names heer bi and bi expressid,  
 To myn auctour thei han her cours Idressid  
 Lik ther degrees to speke in wordes fewe: 748

Justinian Temerarius,

¶ Iustynyan first did\* his face shewe,  
 Nat Iustynyan whilom so vertuous, [p. 416]  
 And of prudent gouernaunce so notable,  
 But Iustynyan Temerarivs, 752

723. resting] rustyng H. 738. disespeyred H.

744. slouthe] slouhe R. 749. did] gan B, J, P.

751] And so notable off prudent gouernaunce R, R 3, H 5, & so noble of prudent gouernaunce H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 170c.

- an irresponsible man of bad character, was exiled by Patrician for extortion, Double of his deedis, fals & deceyuable,  
Of his promys dyuers & vnstable,  
Whilom exilid be Patrician  
For extorsious that he in Roome gan. 756
- and his eyes and nose cut off. Leontius was put down by Tiberius, His nase, his eyen Patrician gaf in charge  
To be kut of, be furious cruelte.  
And of thempire þat was so wide & large,  
¶ Leoncius next gouernid the cite; 760  
And thoruh Fortunis mutabilite  
The same Leonce be Tiberie was cast down,  
His eien put out, deied afftir in prisoun.
- and Tiberius was served in the same fashion and imprisoned for a thief. ¶ Tiberius afftir seruid on the same, 764  
His nose kut of, from his see put down;  
For a rebuk and a perpetuel shame,  
To a cite that callid was Cersoun,  
Withoute merci, fauour or raunsoun 768  
Exilid he was, prisowned as a theeff,  
Bi long[e] turment deide at myscheef.

[How Philip the Emperour died at myschef.]<sup>1</sup>

- Philippicus was an odious heretic and iconoclast, who knocked down the images of the holy saints, ¶ Next to Bochas cam Phelipp on the ring,  
Whos empire no while did endure. 772  
Lik an heretik cursid of lyuyng  
And odious to eueri creature,  
Beet down images & many fresch picture  
Of hooli seyntes, which in ther templis stood, 776  
Wherbi Romeyns dempte that he was wood.
- for which the Romans thought he was mad, and Anastasius put him out of the empire and blinded him. Pursuid he was bi a manli kniht  
Callid Anastaise, and put out of his place;  
And in Cicile, of verray force & myht 780  
He did his eyen out of his hed arace,  
Be iugement his visage to difface,  
Semlabli as he be gret outrages  
Of Cristes cherch diffaced the images; 784
- Anastasius then took possession, and the empire was divided. Deide at myscheeff dirkid with blyndnesse.  
¶ Than Anastaise took possessioun,  
In whos tyme, bookis ber witnesse

755. Patrician] Leoncian P. 764. Tibery H — on] of J, P.

769. he was] was he R.

778. manli] myhty H. 779. Anastasius P, anastasië R.

780. in] om. R. 784. cherch] Chirchis R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 170d.



And cronicles make mencion, 788  
 Of thempire was maad dyuisioun:  
 That first was oon, partid [was] on tueyne  
 Wherof myn auctour in maner doth compleyne.

¶ **Bochas in maner compleynyth of þingis deuidid  
 in too.<sup>1</sup>**

<p><b>A</b>S he reherseth in his oppynyoun          And therupon doth a ground deuise,          Cause &amp; rote of ther deuisioun          Took original of fals couetise;          And ceriously he tellith heer the guise,          Into the cherch whan richesse brouht <i>in pride</i>,          Al perfeccioun anon was set aside.</p> <p>The poore staf and potent of doctryne,          Whan it wer chaungid &amp; list nat for tabide          In wilful pouert, but gan anon declyne,          On statli palfreyis &amp; hih hors to ride,          Sharp heires wer[e]n also leid aside,          Tournid to copis of purpil &amp; sangwyn,          Gownis of scarlet furrid <i>witþ</i> hermyne.</p> <p>Slendre fare of wyn &amp; water cleer,  <i>Witþ</i> abstinence of bred maad of whete          Chaungid tho daies to many fat dyneer,  <i>Witþ</i> confect drynk of ipocratis* sueete;          And sobirnesse dide his boundis lete,          Scarsnesse of foode leffte his olde estat,          With newe excesse gan wexe delicat.</p> <p>Gostly lyuyng in the cherche appallid,          Caused Greekis withdrawe hem <i>in sentence</i>          From the pope, in Petris place stallid,          And list to hym do non obedience.          Fals auarice caused this offence,          That the Grekis dide hemsilf deuide          Fro the Romeyns for ther gret[e] <i>pride</i>.</p>	<p>792 As Bochas          says,          the cause of          this division          was covetous-          ness; and when          wealth brought          pride into the          church, all          perfection was          abandoned.</p> <p>796</p> <p>800 When the          monks rode          on stately          palfreys and          high horses,          and laid aside          their haircloth          for scarlet          gowns trimmed          with ermine,</p> <p>804</p> <p>808 and exchanged          their simple          fare for rich          feasting, and          no longer kept          sober,</p> <p>812</p> <p>816 the spiritual          life of          the church          grew faint, and          the Greeks          withdrew          themselves          from the          Romans.</p>
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790. 2nd was] *om.* R.

791. myn auctour in maner] in maneer myn Auctour H.

796. the] his R.

809. confect] comforte H. confort  
 R 3 — of ipocratis] & ipocras B, J, of ypocras R.

<sup>1</sup> *The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 170d: "How Anastace was compellid to leve the Empire to be a preste and lyve in pouerte."*

- Thus covetous-  
ness and evil  
ambition  
brought  
in division.  
Take record of  
Anastasius, who  
was put out  
of the empire  
by Theodosius,
- Thus coueitise and [fals] ambicioun 820  
Did first gret harm among\* the *spiritual*,  
Brouht in discord and dyuysioun  
Among princis in ther estat royal.  
Who clymbeth hiest, most pereilous is his fall, 824  
Record I take of forseid Anastase,  
Be Theodosie put out of his place.
- and finally  
took orders and  
died in poverty.
- This Theodosie dide his besi peyne [p. 417]  
On Anastace suich werre for to make, 828  
That maugre hym he did hym so *constreyne*,  
That he was fayn thempire to forsake.  
For feer and dreed he did upon hym take  
The oordre of preest from the imperial see, 832  
Content with litil, lyued in pouertee.

[How the hede of Lupus kyng of Lumbardie was  
smet of by Grymaldus.]<sup>1</sup>

- Four mighty  
kings of  
Lombardy  
appeared to  
Bochas, with  
hair grown long  
and beards  
reaching to the  
navel.
- A**FFTIR thes chaunges remembrid be writngis,  
Lik as I haue told heer in partie,  
Cam to Bochas foure myhti kingis 836  
Regnyng echon of old in Lumbardie.  
Afttir the maner and guise of barbarie  
Thei wern arraied, & in ther passage  
With her forgrowen bodi and visage. 840
- They wore  
many-coloured  
garments, broad  
baldrics, large  
golden buckles  
and pendants,  
breeches  
embroidered  
with pearls,
- Ther berdis rauhte ouer ther noueue down;  
Ther garnementes of colours manyfold,  
With brode baudrikis enbracid enviroon,  
Large bokelis & pendauntis of fyn gold. 844  
Ther brech enbrowdid afttir the guise of old,  
Fret with perle, leg stukkid to the kne,  
Pleynyng to Bochas of ther aduersite.
- and shoes laced  
with gold wire  
and set with  
strange stones.
- Ther shon wer racid fresshli to the ton, 848  
Richeli transuersed with gold weer,  
And theron sette many a straunge ston,  
Geyn Phebus liht that shon ful briht & cleer.  
Thes Lombard kynges gan tapproche neer, 852

820. fals] *om.* J, R 3, H 5. 821. among] in B, J, R.  
825. of] on H. 835. partie] *Iupartye* H.  
841. rauhte] *rauh* H — 2nd ther] *þe* H, the R 3, J.  
846. stukkid] *stokkid* H. 848. to] *vnto* R.  
850. straunge] *riche* H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 171a.

And first of alle the proude kyng Lupus  
Vnto Bochas gan his compleynt[e] thus:

¶ “Bochas,” quod he, “as for my partie,  
For to reherse be short conclusioun, 856  
On Grymaldus, a prince of Lumbardie,  
Hath me enchacid out of my regioun  
And cruelli me cheynid in prisoun.  
And aftir that he did a sergaunt sende, 860  
Smet of myn hed, and ther I maad an eende.”

Lupus com-  
plained that  
Grimoaldus  
first chased  
him from his  
kingdom and  
then sent a  
sergeant to  
smite off his  
head.

[How the hede of Alexyus was smet of by Comper-  
toun.]<sup>1</sup>

Aftir this eende rehersed of Lupus,  
For to declare his mortal heynesse,  
¶ Next in ordre ther cam Alexius, 864  
A Lombard kyng famous of richesse,  
Which took on hym of surquedous prowesse  
For to compasse the destruccioun  
Of a prince Icallid Compertoun, 868

Alahis took  
upon himself  
of pride to  
destroy  
another  
Lombard  
prince  
called  
Gunibert;

Which wered also a crowne in Lumbardie.  
Atwixe bothe was werre & gret distaunce,  
But al the peple and lordis of Pauye  
Witb myhti hond and marcial gouernaunce 872  
The saide Alex brouhte to myschaunce;  
And Compertoun, escapid from al dreed,  
Of mortal vengauce leet smyten of his hed.

but the people  
of Pavia  
defeated him,  
and he too  
lost his head.

[How Arypertoun was drowned with his rychesse.]<sup>2</sup>

Aftir whos deth pitousli pleynng, 876  
¶ Tofor Iohn Bochas cam Aripertoun,  
Of Lumbardie whilom lord & kyng,  
Which, lik a fool, of hih presumpcioun  
Al causeles took occasioun 880  
Of volunte, ther is no mor to seye,  
Ageyn the duk off Bagorois to werreye.

Aribertus,  
like a fool,  
made war on  
the duke of  
Bavaria,

864. Alexius] Alahus P. 868. Compertoun] Guniberte P.

873. Alex] Alexius R, Alahis P. 877. Arithberton P.

879. Which] & H — hih] his R.

882. Bagorois] Baiernoys H, R 3, Bauaroies P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 171b.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 171b.

and losing,  
fled to  
Pavia with  
his treasure.

Thes princis tweyne taken haue the feeld,  
Of\* Ariperton the parti gan appeire;\* 884  
His aduersaire anon as he beheeld,  
His coward herte gan to disespeire.  
Into Pauye for feer he gan repeire,  
Took his tresour in purpos anon riht, 888  
For verray dreed to take hym to the fliht.

and then  
took ship  
and was  
drowned in a  
tempest. Such  
is the fate of  
those who  
begin predatory  
wars against  
their  
neighbours.

Took a vessel and entrid is the se,  
With sodeyn tempest assailed & dirknesse,  
His barge pershid bi gret aduersite 892  
And he was drownid with al his gret richesse.  
Loo, heer the fyn of worldli wrechidnesse,  
Namli of them, to gete gret tresours  
That gyne werre ageyn ther neih[e]bours. 896

[How Dediere by pope Adryan and Charles of  
Fraunce was put to flight & died at mischef.]<sup>1</sup>

Next,  
Desiderius,  
king of  
Lombardy,  
appeared.  
Whereas his  
father Agilulf  
had offended  
the pope,

**N**EXT to Bochas, with heuy look & cheere,  
Kyng of Lumbars shewed his presence,  
Callid in his tyme noble Dedieer,  
Notable in armys & of gret excellence. 900  
And wher his faddir hadde don offence  
To the pope and ful gret duresse,  
This kyng caste the damages to redresse.

Desidarius  
sought to make  
amends by  
presenting the  
Holy See with  
the city of  
Faenza,

Agistulphe was his fadris name, 904  
Which to the pope did gret aduersite;  
For which his sone to encrece his fame,  
Of roial fredam and magnanymyte  
And off benigne liberalite, 908  
Gaff to the pope with humble reuerence  
A statli cite that callid is Fayence.

together  
with great  
treasure and a  
mighty castle  
in Ferrara.

Therwith he gaff gret tresour & gret good, [p. 418]  
As he that list of freedam nat to spare, 912  
A mihti castel which on Tibre stood  
Withynne the boundis & lordship of Ferare,  
Which is a cite, pleynli to declare,

884. Of] And B, And of J, P — appeire] to appeire B, to peyre R, H 5. 885. aduersaries H.

892. His barge] And he was H. 893. And] for H.

899. Dedieer] Desidere P. 904. Agistulphe] Agilulphe P.  
910. is] was H — Fayence] Fauence P. 913. castel] Cite H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 171 verso.

- Of antiquite, myn auctour tellith so, 916  
 And stant upon the ryuer of the Po.
- This Dedieer regnyng in Lumbarde  
 Gan wexe famous at his [be]gynnyng,  
 Hadde gret name vpon ech partie; 920  
 But in this eerthe is nothing abidyng:  
 Al stant on chaung; & Fortune in werkyng  
 Is founde vnstable & double of hir visage,  
 Which of this kyng chaunged the corage. 924
- Ther he was first large on eueri side,  
 Liberal founde in many dyuers wise,  
 His goodliheed was chaungid onto pride  
 And his largesse onto couetise. 928  
 Of doublenesse he gan anon deuise  
 To cleyme ageyn, as ye shal vndirstonde,  
 His seide giftis out of the popis honde.
- Which Dedieer hadde made alliaunce, 932  
 As the cronicle maketh mencion,  
 With kyng Pepyn regnyng tho in France.  
 Afftir whos deth, to haue pcessioun  
 And ful lordship of al that regioun, 936  
 He gan of newe fallyn at distaunce  
 Bothe with the pope & with the king of France.
- Of presumpcioun thes werris he began  
 Ageyn his promys, of double variaunce; 940  
 Pope in tho daies was hooli Adrian,  
 Which to stynte this\* trouble & gret myschaunce,  
 Requered helpe of the king of Fraunce.  
 And grete Charlis, in Bochas as I reede, 944  
 Cam to the pope to helpyn in this neede.
- Charlis that tyme was trewe\* protectour  
 To hooli cherche, ther pauys and diffence;  
 Which of hool herte and dilligent labour 948  
 With Dedieer be manli violence  
 He mette in Tuscan, of kingli\* excellence;  
 Hadde a bataile to preeve ther bothe myht:  
 Charlis victor; Dedier put to fliht. 952

He grew famous and prospered; but nothing abides here on earth; Fortune is unstable,

and the king became proud and covetous and decided to take his gifts back again.

He had also allied himself with Pepin of France, so as to get possession of his kingdom after his death,

and now he fell out with both Charlemagne, who succeeded Pepin, and Pope Adrian.

Charlemagne was a true protector of the church, and, meeting Desiderius in Tuscany, put him to flight

925. Ther he] The R. 929. anon he gan R.  
 938. 2nd with] om. H, R, R 3. 939. thes] the R.  
 942. this] the B, J, P. 945. this] his R.  
 946. trewe] cheef B, chief J, P.  
 950. knigli] knihtli B, J—of] & H. 951. bothe] bothis R.

and laid siege  
to Pavia, where  
he took refuge.  
Starvation  
forced him to  
surrender,

As I fynde, he fledde into Pavia;  
Worthi Charlis leide his\* siege afforn,  
Constreynd hem upon ech partye,  
For lak of vitaille thei wer almost lorn; 956  
Thei wanted[e] licour, greyn and corn.  
Be sodeyn constreynt & gret aduersite  
To kyng Charlis thei yald up the cite.

and he was sent  
to prison in  
France, where  
he died at  
mischief. He  
was the last  
king of the  
Lombards.

Kyng Dedieer was sent into Fraunce, 960  
With myhti cheynis fetrid in prisoun;  
Lik a wrech, in sorwe & in\* penaunce,  
Deide at myscheef; ther geyned no raunsoun,  
Which hadde afforn so gret pociessioun. 964  
Aftir whos day, as be old writyng,  
Among Lumbardis was neuer crownid kyng.

[Off pope Iohn a woman with child and put doun.]<sup>1</sup>

Rounded and  
shorn like a  
bishop and  
wearing the  
broad tonsure  
and vestments  
of a priest,  
Pope John, a

AFFTIR thes princis rehersed heer-toforn,  
Drownid in teres cam a creature, 968  
Lik a bisshop roundid\* & Ishorn;  
And as a prest she had a brod tonsure,  
Hir apparaille outward & vesture,  
Beyng a woman, wherof Bochas took heed, 972  
Lik a prelat shapyn was hir weede.

woman, a  
beardless  
prelate,  
who unworthily  
sat in the chair  
of St. Peter,  
appeared  
drowned in  
tears before  
Bochas.

She was the same that of yore agon  
Vnworthily sat in Petris place;  
Was afftirward callid Pope Iohn, 976  
A berdles prelat, non her seyn on hir face.  
Of hir berthe namyd was the place,  
Mayence, a cite stonyng in Itaille,  
Vpon the Reen, ful famous of vitaille. 980

In her youth  
she devoted  
herself to the  
liberal sciences

In hir youthe and in hir tendre age  
Forsook hir kyn, and in especiall  
Caste she wolde for hir auauntage

954. his] a B, J, P.

961. myhti] om. R.

969. roundid] Iroundid B, I rounded J.

972. wherof] theroff R. 973. hir] his R.

975. Vnworthily] vnworthly R.

979. Mayence] Magonice P — stonyng] not standing P.

980. of vitaille] it is no faile H.

959. thei] om. R, H, R 3, H 5.

962. 2nd in] gret B, J, H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 171 verso.

- Yiue hir to konyng, bodi, herte & all. 984 and became famous for her learning.  
 And [in] the science[s] callid liberal, l  
 In alle seuene, bi famous excellence,  
 Bi gret studie she hadde experience,  
 Hir name kouth in many dyuers lond. 988 She went to England, where all people thought she was a man, and taught  
 To shewe hir cunningg first whan she began,  
 Serchyng prouynces cam to Ing[e]lond,  
 No wiht supposyng but that she was a man; 992 and taught grammar, logic and rhetoric in Rome.  
 Cam to Roome, hir stori telle can,  
 Tauhte gramer, sophistre [and] logik,  
 Redde in schoolis openli rethorik.  
 In the tyme of emperour Lotarie, [p. 419] In the time of the emperor  
 Afftir the deth, as maad is mencion, — 996 Lothair, after the death of  
 Fro myn auctour yif I shal nat varie, — Pope Leon, she was herself  
 That the pope which callid was Leoun, made pope by  
 The saide woman be eleccioun election and  
 Istallid was, supposyng no wiht than 1000  
 Be no tokne but that she was a man.  
 The book of sortis aftir that anon, called Pope  
 Of aenture tournid up-so-doun; John. Falling  
 She was callid & namyd Pope Iohn, 1004 into tempta-  
 Of whos natural disposicioun tion, she was gotten  
 Fill bi processe into temptacioun: with child,  
 Quik with childe, the hour cam on hir than; delivered at  
 Was delyuered at Seynt Ihon Lateran. 1008 St. Lateran  
 Afftir put down for hir gret outrage, and afterwards  
 I wil on hire spende no more labour, put down for  
 But passe ouer al the surplusage her great  
 Of hir lyuyng and of hir gret errour; 1012 outrage.  
 Tourne my stile to themperour  
 Callid Arnold, & write his pitous chaunce,  
 Sone to Charlis, the grete kyng of Fraunce.

[How arnold son to Charles of Fraunce was eten  
 with lys and so died.]<sup>1</sup>

- To this Charlis, as bookis determyne, 1016 Arnulph, a natural son of  
 He was sone nat born in mariage, Carloman,  
 But begetyn of a concubyne; king of  
 Fraunce,

991. No wiht] Nouht R, nouht H.  
 1015. Charlis the grete] Charlemaine P.

993. and] om. R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 172 recto.

- undertook to reign without title as emperor of the Romans. Took upon hym of surquedous outrage,  
 Witbout title of berthē or lynage, 1020  
 To succede be fraude and fals labour  
 Among Romeyns to regne as emperour.  
 He was vngracious sitting in that estat,  
 In myscheeff spentē his daies euerichon, 1024  
 With lees and wermys maad infortunat,  
 Thoruh skyn and flessch fret onto þe bon.  
 Craft of medecyne nor socour was ther non,  
 So deepe [he] was fret in his entraille; 1028  
 Deide in distresse; no leche myhte auaille.

¶ Thauctour geyn the pride of Princis.<sup>1</sup>

- Bochas pauses for a while to write angrily of the sins of tyrants, counselling them to remember this proud Arnulph. **M**YN auctour Bochas stynt heer for a while,  
 Sharped his penne of entencioun,  
 Gan of angre to transport his stile 1032  
 To write off tirauntis for ther\* transgressioun,  
 Moor wood & fell than any scorioun,  
 Them counseillyng, whan thei be most bold,  
 For to remembre on this proude Arnold. 1036  
 He ne was nat in his pride assailed,  
 Nat with wolues, tiges nor leouns,  
 With rauynous beres nor wilde boor\* trauailed,  
 Nowthir with othir myhti champiouns, 1040  
 Which haue conquered many regiouns;  
 But with wermys engendrid of his kynde  
 The saide Arnold was moordrid, as I fynde.  
 In suich disioynt the sayd[e] Arnold stood, 1044  
 With lees and wermys fret ageyn nature,  
 That was so nih[e] born of Charlis blood,  
 Impotent the peyne to endure.  
 Which was in sooth an vnkouth auenture, 1048  
 That a prince myht nat be socourid  
 Of smale wermys for to be deuourid.  
 A gret example, who list considre & see,  
 To princis alle for tabate ther pride. 1052  
 Lat hem considre ther fragilite,

1023. that] his H — estat] state R. 1031. of] for H.  
 1033. for ther] the B, J. 1035. counseillyng] counsailid H.  
 1036. on] vpon H. 1039. nor] with H — boor] wolues B,  
 bores J, P. 1044. Arnolphe R. 1046. nihe] myhty R.

<sup>1</sup> The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 172 recto: "Bochas counceyleth princys to remembre on Arnold."



- To seen an emperour [for] to abide\*  
 Thassaut of wermys — & ley ther bost aside,  
 In this Arnold wisli aduertise 1056  
 How God hath power ther pompe to chastise.  
 Deth of Arnold dide my penne encoumbre  
 For the gret abhominacioun.  
 ¶ Than onto Bochas cam the tuelue in noumbre, 1060  
 Callid Pope Iohn, as maad is mencioum,  
 Entryng be fraude and fals eleccioun,  
 To Goddis lawe froward & contrarie,  
 Nat lik a pastor but a mercenarie. 1064
- God has power  
to chastise  
their pomp.
- The death of  
Arnulph dis-  
gusted me.  
Then came  
Pope John,  
called the  
Twelfth,

[Howe pope Iohn the xij<sup>th</sup>e for lechery & vicious  
 lif was put down.]<sup>1</sup>

- Callid afforn he was Octauyan,  
 Nothing resemyng Petris gouernaunce.  
 Fro the tyme in Roome that he began  
 To sitte as pope, he gaf his attendaunce 1068  
 To folwe his lust & his flessfli plesaunce, —  
 In haukyng, huntyng stood his felicite,  
 And among women conuersaunt to bee.  
 Vnto surfet, riot, glotonye [p. 420] 1072  
 He gaff hym hooli; took of God non heede;\*  
 Gretli disclaudrid he was of lecherie;  
 Kepte in his court, withoute shame or dreed, 1076  
 A noumbre of wommen, in cronicle as I reed.  
 Too cardinales of purpos did entende  
 His vicious lyff to correcte & amende.  
 And of entent thes cardynalis too  
 The chersch esclaudrid cast hem to redresse; 1080  
 Made lettres, sent hem to Otto,  
 Duk of Saxonye\*, that he sholde him\* dresse  
 Toward Roome, and of [his] hih noblesse
- who entered  
by fraud  
and spent  
his time in  
hawking,  
hunting and  
in intercourse  
with women,
- and gave him-  
self wholly to  
riot, gluttony  
and excess.  
He took no  
heed of God;  
and when two  
cardinals tried  
to correct him
- and sent  
letters to Otto,  
Duke of  
Saxony,  
requesting him  
to reform the  
mischief,

1054. to abide] tabide B — for] *om.* H, R, J, R 3, H 5.  
 1060. the] ther H, R 3. 1062. Entryng] Entrid R.  
 1064. but] lik H.  
 1073. non] no R — heede] keepe B, kepe J, P.  
 1080. esclaudrid] disclaudrid H, ensklandrid H 5.  
 1082. Saxonye] Saxoyne B, Saxone R — him] hem B.  
 1083. hih] *om.* R, J.

<sup>1</sup> MS J. leaf 172 recto.

- On hooli cherche to haue compassioun, 1084  
 Make of this myscheef iust reformacioun.
- John cut off the  
 nose of the one  
 and the hand  
 of the other.
- This Pope Iohn, whan he hath parceyued  
 Of his\* cardynales the maner of writyng,  
 And how the duk the lettres hath\* resceyued, 1088  
 He to do vengauce made no tarieng;  
 Bood no lenger, this iugement yuiyng:  
 Kitt of the nose felli of the ton,  
 Hond of the tothir; and ech was callid Iohn. 1092
- The Emperour  
 wrote to him,  
 but without  
 avail; and  
 finally he was  
 deposed by  
 cardinals.  
 I don't want  
 to write any  
 more about him.
- The emperour did[e] his lettres sende  
 To this pope of hool affeccion,  
 Of his defautis he sholde hym amende.  
 But ther was fou[n]de no correccioun; 1096  
 For which he was deposid & put down  
 Bi cardynalis for his cursidnesse;  
 Me list no mor write of his wrechidnesse.
- Seeing all this  
 mischief, my  
 author prepared  
 openly to  
 describe the  
 faults of  
 prelates,
- ¶ For his defautis & his gret outrage 1100  
 This Iohn put down, as ye haue herd deuise,  
 Myn auctour aftir kauht a gret corage,  
 Seyng this myscheef in many sondri wise,  
 In hooli cherch[e] which that did arise 1104  
 Among prelatis, cast hymselfen blyue  
 Ther diffautis openli descryue,
- their pride  
 and their  
 presumption;  
 but remembering  
 a verse in the  
 Psalter, "Do  
 not touch my  
 prophets nor  
 malign against  
 them,"
- Of ther pride and ther presumpcion.  
 And whil he gan studie in this mateer, 1108  
 He gan remembre anon in his resoun  
 Vpon a vers write[n] in the Sauteer:  
 "Touche nat my prophetis, ne neih hem nat to ner,  
 Nor ageyn hem, be[th] war in deed & thouht, 1112  
 In no wise that ye maligne nouht."
- he withdrew  
 his hand  
 and turned to  
 Duke Charles  
 of Lorraine.
- For this cause, as ye shal vndirstonde,  
 Touchyng this mateer, pley[n]li as I reede,  
 Myn auctour [Bochas] gan withdrawe his honde, 1116  
 Leftt his purpos, and forth he gan proceede, —  
 To whos presence, or that he took heede,  
 Cam a prince, Duk Charlis of Loreyne;  
 Hym besouhte to write his greuou peyne. 1120
1085. reformacioun] informacion R.  
 1087. his] thes B, thise J, these P. 1088. hath] haue B.  
 1096. was] om. R. 1101. Iohn] Pope R.  
 1105. cast] cauht H. 1110. writen] om. R.  
 1111. my] om. R. 1112. beth war] bewar B, J.  
 1117. gan] can R.

[Off Charles of Loreyn confounded with hunger.]<sup>1</sup>

<p>¶ This duk of Loreyne, as ye shal conceyue,          Hadde werre with the kyng of Fraunce          Callid Hewe Capet; and, as I apparceyue,          An archebishop, the kyng to do plesaunce,          Of hatreede made his ordenaunce          [A]geyn this duk, await upon hym kepte,          That he hym took abedde whil* he slepte.</p>	<p>1124</p>	<p>This duke was at war with Hugh Capet and was taken in bed by an archbishop,</p>
<p>The said bisshop gan falsli vndermyne          This worthi duk, bi ful fals tresoun,          Which, as I fynde, was callid Ancelyne;          And he was bisshop that tyme of Leoun.          Which be fraude &amp; fals collusioun          Took this prince that was duk of Loreyne,          And to the kyng he brouht hym bi a treyne.</p>	<p>1128</p>	<p>Ascelin of Laon,</p>
<p>Bi whom he was delyuered to prisoun,          To Orlyanes, and with cheynis bounde.          What was his eende is maad no menciouun;          But in a pet horrible &amp; profounde,          Mischeeff with hunger did hym so confounde,          That, I suppose, this duk of Loreyne          Consumyd was for constreynt of his peyne.</p>	<p>1132</p> <p>1136</p> <p>1140</p>	<p>who delivered him to the king, who in turn sent him to prison in Orleans, where he was confined in a horrible deep pit and probably died of hunger.</p>

[How kyng Salamon whilom kyng of Hungery was put to flight.]<sup>2</sup>

<p>A FFTIR to Bochas in noumbre <i>per cam</i> doun          Princis foure; and ech for his partie          Ther greuys tolde; and first king Salamon,          Which that whilom regned in Hungrie,          Bothe fool &amp; coward, bookis specefie,          Void of resoun, noised of ignoraunce,          And, at a poynt, koude no purueiaunce.          Fortune also did at hym disdeyne;          For he was nouthur manli nor coraious.          Ageyn[es] whom wer worthi princis tweyne;</p>	<p>1144</p> <p>1148</p>	<p>Four princes then appeared to Bochas. The first, King Salomon of Hungary, a fool and a coward,</p>
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1123. Hewe] huhe R, heugh H, hugh J, R 3 — apparceyue] parceyue R. 1127. whil] whan B.

1128. The] This R, H. 1130. Which] & H — was] he was H.

1135. delyuered] committid H. 1144. Ther] That R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 127c.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 127d.

was chased  
out of his  
region by two  
notable and  
virtuous prin-  
ces, Ladislaus  
and Geysa,

Zerta was oon, with Laudisalus, 1152  
Famous in armys, notable and vertuous; —  
Bothe attonis geyn Salamon cam down  
And made hym fleen out of his regioun.

and Bochas  
wrote no more  
about him.

Thoruh his ynhappi froward cowardise, [p. 421] 1156  
Ther was in hym founde no diffence;  
Fliht was his sheelde, list nat in no wise  
Geyn his enmyes make resistence;  
Failed herte to come to presence 1160  
To saue his lond, he dradde hymselfe so sore,  
Of whom Bochas writ in his book no more.

[How Petro kyng of Hungery was slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

King Pietro of  
Hungary was  
malicious and  
foolish enough  
to offend Charles  
of France, who  
put out his  
eyes and slew  
him.

¶ Anothir kyng heer put in remembrance 1164  
Callid Petro, regnyng in Hungrye,  
For his defautis ageyn the kyng of France  
Icallid Charlis, of malis & folie,  
Be indignacioun, this\* was his tormentrie:  
His eyen put out, — ther was no bet socour — 1168  
And aftir slayn be doom of themperour.

[How Diogenes the emperour was take and eiene  
put out.]<sup>2</sup>

Ernest, Duke  
of Swabia, who  
opposed the  
Emperor Henry,  
was banished  
to dwell with  
savage beasts  
in a forest,  
where he was  
slain.

¶ Afftir to Bochas ther cam tweyne on þe ryng,  
Duk of Sweue, Hermest, as I reede,  
Geyn\* themperour first maliciousli werki[n]g, 1172  
Herry themperour regnyng tho in deede.  
But for his malis, this was his fatal meede:  
Banshed to duelle among beestis most sauage,  
Slayn in a forest for his gret outrage. 1176

After Constan-  
tine of  
Grece died,  
Diogenes, a  
knight, suc-  
ceeded him in  
Constantinople,

¶ Whan Constantyn departed from this lyff,  
Which of al Grece was lord and gouernour,  
Be mariage of hire that was his wiff,  
A kniht Diogenes was maad emperour; 1180  
Fortune to hym dide so gret fauour,

1152. Zerta] Herta J, Geysa P. 1159. make] made H.

1164. Petre H. 1167. this] that B, J.

1171. Sueuie P — earnest P.

1172. Geyn] Ageyn B, J, R 3, P. 1173. Henry P.

1175. among] mong R 3 — most] om. J, P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 172 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 172 verso.

Constantynople holdyng in his hond,  
As souereyn prince of al Grekis lond.

Yet ther wer\* summe that gruchched þerageyn 1184

And hadde of hym gret indignacioun.  
The kyng of Perse, Belset Tarquemayn,  
From hym be force took many a regioun;  
Mesopotanye to his pecessioun

1188

Took be strong hand, thoruh his cheualrie,  
Maugre Diogenes, & al-most al Surrie.

Belset Tarquemayn made hymself so strong,  
Bi manli force Diogenes tassaile;  
And for Diogenes thouhte he did hym wrong,  
He gan ordeyne gret stuff & apparaile;  
A day assigned, thei mette in bataile,—  
Diogenes of froward auenture

1192

1196

He and his knihtis brouht to disconfiture.

Take he was and brouht be gret disdeyn,  
In whom as tho ther was no resistence,  
To kyng Belset callid Tarquemayn.

1200

And whan he cam onto his presence,  
Ageyn[e]s hym was youe this sentence:  
To lyn down plat, and the kyng Belsette  
Sholde take his foot and on his throte it sette.

1204

This was doon for an hih[e] despiht,  
Diogenes brouht foorth on a cheyne,  
Withoute reuerence, fauour or respiht,  
At gret[e] feestis assigned was his peyne;  
And aldirlast put out his eye[n] tweyne.  
The wheel of Fortune tourneth as a ball;  
Sodeyn clymbyng axeth a sodeyn fall.

1208

[How Robert duk of Normandie fauht with turkes  
was named to the crowne of Ierusalem & died at  
mischef.]<sup>1</sup>

**A** WORTHY prince spoke of in many rewm, 1212  
Noble Robert, duk of Normandie,  
Chose to the crowne of Iherusalem;

Duke Robert of Normandy was a worthy prince.

1184. wer] was B, H 5, P. 1186. Belset] belsate H, Belsech P— Tarquemayn] Tarquenyayne J, Tarquynyan H, Turcomane P. 1191. Tarquynyan H, Tarquenyman J.

1200. Belsech Tarcomene P— Tarquynyayn H.

1204. throte] bak H, bake R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 173 recto.

although some men grumbled, among them Belsech Turcoman, who took Mesopotamia and nearly all Syria away from him.

Diogenes considered himself wronged and met Belsech in battle, but was defeated

and brought before his conqueror, who after compelling him to lie down on the ground, set his foot on his throat in despite.

Diogenes was afterwards exhibited at festivals and finally his eyes were put out.

- He refused the crown of Jerusalem, which lost him Fortune's favour.
- But for cause he dide it denye,  
Fortune ay hadde onto hym enuye. 1216  
The same Robert next in order was  
That cam to pleyne his fall onto Bochas.
- Together with Godfrey de Berrillon he fought the Turks and Saracens,
- For Cristis feith this myhti champioun,  
This Duk Robert, armyd in plate & maile, 1220  
With manli Godfrey, Godfrey Bollioun,  
Ageyn[es] Turkis fauht a gret bataille,  
For Cristes feith that it sholde auaille  
To susteene his lawe in ther entent 1224  
To alle the kyngis of the occident.
- who sought to destroy Christ's faith, and with the aid of the kings of England, Normandy and France defeated them.
- Of Turkis, Sarsyns was so gret a noubre,  
Geyn Cristis lawe gadred a puissaunce,  
The feith of Crist falsli to encoumbre: 1228  
But ther wer maad[e] hasti ordenaunce  
Be kynges of Ingland, Normandie & Fraunce;  
First to socoure did his besi peyne  
Godfrey Bollioun, that was duk of Loreyne, 1232
- Robert was chosen king of Jerusalem;
- Which on Sarsyns made a disconfiture,  
Maugre Turkis, for al ther cruel myht.  
In which bataille Crist made hym to recure  
The feeld that day for to supporte his riht, 1236  
Wher said Robert was founde so good a kniht,  
That for his noblesse, be report of writyng,  
Of Iherusalem was namyd to be kyng.
- but he would not accept, because his older brother William had died in England and he was the next heir.
- Assentid nat onto the eleccioun, [p. 422] 1240  
Because of newe that he did vndirstonde  
His elder brothir, for short conclusioun,  
Icallid William was ded in Ingland;  
Knowyng hymself[e] next heir to that lond, 1244  
Forsook Iherusalem, and lik a manli kniht  
Cam to Ingland for to cleyme his riht.
- He went to England and found his younger brother Henry crowned king, who said he was rightful heir, Robert being king of Jerusalem.
- And yit or he cam he hadde knouleching,  
His yonger brothir, [that] callid [was] Herry, 1248  
Had take upon hym to be crownid kyng;  
Told his lordis and princis fynalli  
He was next heir; entrid rihtfulli  
As enheritour to succede in that rewme, 1252  
His brother beyng kyng of Iherusalem.

1229. ordenaunce] purveiaunce H. 1238. of] and R.

1240. onto] to R. 1247. And] om. H, R 3.

1248. yonger] yong R. 1249. upon] on H. 1252. As] an R

God wot the cas* stood al in oþer wise: The said[e] Duk Robert of Normandie Purposed hym be marcial emprise From his brother to take the regalie. Took his princis and his cheualrie; Thouhte he wolde, lik a manli kniht, Arryue in Ingland and reioysshe his riht.	1256	So Robert proposed to take the kingdom by force,
Bothe in o feeld assemblid on o day, The brethre tweyne, ech with strong partie To darreyne, and make no delay, Euerich with othir to holde chaumpartie. But whan the lordes this mischeef did espie, Thei besied hem and wer nat rek[e]les Atween the brethre to refourme pes.	1260  1264	and both sides met on the field of battle; but before the fight began, the lords inter- vened, and the brothers
The said[e] brethre wer fulli condescendid Vpon this poynt, for short conclusioun, As in thaccord was iustli comprehendid: Herry to holde and haue pocessioun Duryng his lyff of al this regioun, And Robert sholde haue for his partie A summe of gold with al Normandie.	1268  1272	agreed to let Henry keep his crown in England, Robert to have Normandy and £3000 a year.
Thre thousand pound, put in remembrance, Ech yeer to Robert sent fro this regioun, Of which[e] pay to make ful assuraunce Was leid hostages, as maad is mencionn. But yit of newe fill a discencioun Atwixe the brethre, of hatreede & envie, For certeyn castellis that stood in Normandie,	1276  1280	But a new quarrel broke out about certain Norman castles,
Which castel[is] longed of heritage Vnto the kyngis iurediccioun, Of which the duk took his auantage, Maugre the kyng, & heeld pocessioun — Torned aftir to his confusioun. And whan the kyng did this thing* espie, With strong[e] hond cam into Normandie,	1284  1288	which belonged by inheritance to the king, and of which Robert took possession.
Wher the duk was leid a siege aboute. Made ordenaunce to recure his riht; Gat the castel; took his brother oute;		Henry came to Normandy with a strong force, took his brother Robert

1254. cas] cause B, J, H 5.

1259. Thouhte] thouth H.

1261. 1st o] the H, a R, R 3, H 5 — 2nd o] a R, J, R 3, P.

1282. castell R.

1287. did this thing] this thing did B, J, P.

- and put him in prison, where he remained 14 years until he died.
- Emprisowned hym of verray force & myht; 1292  
 Left hym allone out of mennys siht  
 Fourteene yeer, the cronicle writ so;  
 Ther he deide in myscheeff and in wo.
- While Bochas was busy with his book, the Emperor Henry IV. came to him to complain of his son's great unkindness;
- ¶ Whil Bochas was besi in his labour 1296  
 His book tacomplissch with gret dilligence,  
 To hym appeered the grete emperour  
 Callid Herry, shewyng his presence;  
 Gan compleyne of the grete offence 1300  
 Doon to hym, the myscheeff and distresse,  
 Bi his sonys gret vnkydenesse.
- for he bound his father in chains and let him die in prison.
- The which[e] sone was callid eek Herry,  
 Gretli accusid of ingratitude, 1304  
 Cause he wrouhte so disnaturalli:  
 Took his fadir with force & multitude,  
 Bounde and cheynid, shortli to conclude;  
 And aftirward, ther geyned no raunsoun, 1308  
 At gret myscheef deied in prisoun.
- [How Iocelyne prince of Rage for pride  
 slouthe & lecherie died in pouert.]<sup>1</sup>
- Next in order came Josselyn, with sad and dead visage. He was prince of Rages, a famous city, but gave himself to lechery and
- N**EXT in ordre, with trist & ded visage,  
 Vnto Bochas to shewe his heuynesse 1312  
 Cam Iocelyn, lord & prince of Rage,  
 Which is a cite famous of richesse.  
 And this prince, myn auctour berth witnessse,  
 Was gretly youe to slouthe & slogardie,  
 And al his lust he sette in lecherie. 1316
- idleness and neglected his realm and lost his reputation to such a degree
- Leftt his lordship out of gouernaunce,  
 For lak of wisdam & discrecioun;  
 In flesschli lust[es] set al his plesaunce;  
 And to the contres aboute hym enviroun 1320  
 He was nat had in reputacioun:  
 Certeyn princis, myn auctour doth descryue,  
 Of his lordship cast hym to depryue.
- that several kings laid siege to his city and,
- Amongis which the prince of Alapie, [p. 423] 1324  
 Callid Sangwyn, the stori who list see,  
 To Iosalyn hauyng gret envie,

1292. Enprisowned R.                      1293. of] of his R.  
 1299. shewyng] shewid H.                1309. At] A R.  
 1319. lustes] lust J, P.                    1325. Sagnine P.

MS. J. leaf 173 verso.



Leide a sieg to Rages his\* cite,  
 He beyng absent ferr fro that contre. 1328  
 And thus for slouthe & wilful negligence,  
 Rages was take be myhti violence.

And Iosalyn comaundid to prisoun;  
 To hym Fortune was so contrarious: 1332  
 Lost his lordship and domynacioun.  
 Loo, heer the fyn of folkis vicious;  
 Slouh, delicat, proud and lecherous,  
 Deide in pouert, in myscheef & in neede; 1336  
 Of vicious princis, loo, heer the fynal meede!

capturing him,  
 put him in  
 prison, where  
 he died. Such  
 is the final  
 reward of  
 proud and  
 vicious princes.

[How the Emperour Andronicus slouh all that were  
 of the blood Roial cherysshed vicious peple and  
 aftir was honget.]<sup>1</sup>

A S verray heir and trewe successour  
 Bi eleccioun and also bi lynage,  
 Cam Andronicus, as lord & emperour, 1340  
 Constantynople, crownid yong of age,  
 Next to Bochas, with trist & pale visage,  
 Besechyng hym to doon his besi cure  
 To remembre his woful auenture. 1344

Andronicus I.,  
 who was the  
 rightful  
 emperor in  
 Constanti-  
 nople, came to  
 Bochas and  
 besought  
 him to  
 remember  
 his story.

Among Grekis, be stori and scripture,  
 This Andronicus gouernid nat ariht;  
 Ageyn[es] lawe & eek ageyn nature,  
 Founde with his sustir flessfli on a niht; 1348  
 Bothe of assent[e] took hem to the fliht,  
 Ageyn[es] hym his cosyn was so fell,  
 Lord of that contre callid Emanvell.

He did not  
 rule justly and,  
 discovered one  
 night with his  
 sister, fled for  
 fear of his  
 cousin  
 Manuel.

For a tyme stood as a man exilid 1352  
 For his discenciouns and many vnkouth stryff;  
 Bi his princis afftir reconciled,  
 Standyng in hope he sholde amende his lyff.  
 But in the tyme that he was fugitiff, 1356  
 He was maad lord, & stood so for a while  
 Regnyng in Pontus, of Asie a gret ile.

For a time he  
 was an exile,  
 but afterwards  
 his princes,  
 hoping he  
 would amend  
 his life, became  
 reconciled to  
 him, and he  
 reigned in  
 Pontus.

In this while Emanuel was ded,  
 Fall in gret age, the stori tellith thus, 1360

1327. his] the B, J. 1331. to] vnto R.  
 1341. crownid] crownyng R. 1347. eek] om. H.  
 1349. took] to R. 1352. 2nd a] om. R. 1355. his] om. H.  
 MS. J. leaf 173d.

Manuel died  
and left a son  
called Alexius,  
who had a  
tutor of the  
same name.

Hauyng a child, & he, who list take heed,  
Whil he duelled in his fadris hous  
Among Grekis callid Alexivs;  
And the tutour he was assigned too  
Icallid was Alexivs also.

1364

This tutor  
took all the  
power in  
Constantinople  
to himself;

The same that was assigned his tutour,  
Took upon hym al the gouernaunce  
And ful poweer as lord & emperour,  
Hadde al thempire vndir his obeissaunce;  
Princis, lordis gaff to hym attendaunce;  
Wher that he was present or absent,  
Ech thyng was doon at his comaundement.

1368

1372

but he was a  
tyrant, and his  
subjects decided  
to call Andron-  
icus back to  
the imperial  
throne.

I meene as thus: he had al in his hond  
Constantynople, cite of gret substaunce;  
But for extorsiouns which he did in the lond  
On his sogettis, and for mys gouernaunce,  
Among the lordis it fill in remembraunce,  
Alle of assent in hert[e] gan desire  
Calle Andronicus ageyn to his empire.

1376

No sooner was  
Andronicus in  
Constantinople  
than he slew  
all the royal  
blood except  
a prince called  
Isaac.

Bassent restorid and crownid emperour,  
Constantynople entryng the cite,  
Besied hym be fraudulent labour  
Al the blood born of the imperial see  
For to be slayn, of vengable cruelte,  
Be iugement of this Andronicus,  
Except a prince callid Isacivs.

1380

1384

He was as  
evil and  
revengeful in  
old age as in  
his youth, and

Thus in effect the trouthe was weel seene,  
He was vengable last in his old age,  
Riht as he was in his yeeris greene,  
Felli gouerned, ful off fals outrage,  
Last of alle, malicious of corage.

1388

Took to counsail, in Grece he was thus namyd,  
Al suich as wern disclaundrid or diffamyd.

1392

associated with  
defamed men,  
homicides and  
ribalds, sparing  
no woman

Homycides he hadde in his housholde,  
Tirauntis that wrouhte ageyn[es] rihtwisnesse;  
Cherished all that hardi wern and bolde  
Widwes, wyues & maidenes to oppresse;\*  
Ribaudie was callid gentillesse;  
Spared nouter, he was so lecherous,  
Women sworn chast nor folk religious.

1396

1400

- Hadde also no maner conscience  
 To pile his sogettis falsli be rauyne;  
 Took what hym list be iniust violence;  
 To alle vices his youthe he did enclyne. 1404  
 And alle that wer[e]n of the roial lyne  
 Wer slayn echon, except Isacivs,  
 As I told erst[e], bi Andronicvs.
- As I fynde, for hym in haste he sente, [p. 424] 1408  
 For this purpos to come to his presence,  
 To moord[e]ren hym, this was his entente;  
 Be dyuers toknes and many euidence,  
 And fully knew the fyn of his sentence, 1412  
 He lik a prince list [to] come no neer;  
 Smet of the hed[e] of the massageer.
- And afftir that, of manli prouidence,  
 Mid the cite shewed hym lik a kniht; 1416  
 Praied lordis to yiue hym audience,  
 Princis, iuges for to doon hym riht,  
 That he myht declaren in ther siht  
 Gret iniuries, damages outragious 1420  
 Wrouht bi themperour callid Andronicus.
- “O citeseyens, that knowen al the guise  
 Of your emperour callid Andronicus;  
 Nat emperour, so ye list aduertise, 1424  
 But a tiraunt cruel & furious,  
 A fals moordrer, vengable, despitous,  
 Hath of newe, of\* frowar[d] fals corage  
 Slayn of thempire hooli the lynage. 1428
- Ther is alyue left non of the blood  
 Sauf I allone of the roial lyne;  
 For Andronicus lik a tiraunt wood  
 Hath slay[e]n echon, breeffli to termyne; 1432  
 His suerd of vengauce thei myhte nat declyne.  
 Now purposeth of mortal tirannye,  
 Slen me also that am of ther allie.
- Requeryng you in this consistorie, 1436  
 O citeseyn[e]s that heer present bee,  
 To remembre and calle to memorie  
 How this famous imperial cite  
 Hath ay be redi to doon equite, 1440

and pillaging  
 his subjects  
 by unjust  
 violence.

He sent for  
 Isaac with the  
 intention of  
 murdering  
 him; but  
 Isaac smote  
 off the head  
 of the  
 messenger

and prayed the  
 lords and  
 princes of the  
 city to do him  
 justice, saying,

“O citizens,  
 you know that  
 the cruel  
 tyrant  
 Andronicus  
 has slain all  
 the royal  
 blood

except  
 me alone,  
 whom he now  
 purposes to  
 destroy.

“I beg you  
 to remember  
 that this city  
 has always  
 been  
 ready to do  
 justice and

1405. And] To R. 1413. to] om. R — neer] were R.  
 1427. of] and B, R, P, & H 5. 1435. ther] bis H.

repress the  
wrong of  
tyrants.

Besi also of ther hih noblesse  
Wrong of tirauntes manli to repressse.

"Philosophers  
and poets say  
that the blood  
of tyrants is a  
noble sacrifice,  
and, since you  
are just, weigh  
this matter  
in balance."

Philisophres and poetis eek deuise,  
In ther sawes prudent and notable, 1444

Blood of tirauntis is noble sacrefise  
To God aboue\*, whan thei be vengable.  
And sith ye bee rihtful, iust & stable,  
In your werkis void of variaunce, 1448  
Weieth this mateer iustli in ballaunce."

The people  
agreed to put  
down Andronicus  
and set up  
Isaac.  
The tyrant  
betook himself  
to a fortress,

The peple echon, alle of oon assent,  
For outrages of this Andronicus 1452  
Put hym down be rihtful iugement,

In whos place set up Isacius.  
The said tiraunt, froward & furious,  
Gan maligne and hym siluen dresse  
In his diffence to take a forteresse. 1456

but was  
captured,  
stripped of his  
garments, one  
of his eyes  
rent out, and

It halpe hym nat to make resistance,  
So as he stood[e] void of al fauour;  
Segid he was, and be violence,\*

Maugre his myht[e], rent out of that tour; 1460  
Spoiled cruelli; fond no bet socour,  
Stood al nakid, quakyng in his peyne;  
And first rent out oon of his eien tweyne.

compelled to  
ride backwards  
on an ass,  
holding fast  
to his tail, to  
the delight of  
all the people.

And ouermor he hadde this reward, 1464  
Withoutyn help[e], socour or respiht,

Rood on an asse, his face set bakward,  
The assis tail holdyng for despiht.  
Whom to beholde the peple hath deliht; 1468

To poore and riche thoruhout the cite  
Hym to rebuke was grantid liberte.

After that, he  
was taken out  
of the city  
in a cart and  
hanged amidst  
a terrible  
clamour until  
he died.

Afftir al this, in a carte sette  
And vengabli lad out off the toun, 1472

Be doom Ihangid on an hih gibet.  
The peple on hym, to his confusioun,  
Made [a] clamour and terrible soun,

Wolde neuer fro the galwes weende 1476  
Til in myscheeff bi deth he made an eende.

1445. noble] notable H, R 3. 1446. aboff B.

1459. violence] benivolence B.

1467. for] so of H.

1472. vengabli] vengable R.

1475. a] om. R, J, H 5 — and] and a H, R 3, P.

## Lenvoye.

- I**N this tragedie, ageyn Andronicus  
 Bochas maketh an exclamacioun,  
 And ageyn alle princis vicious, 1480  
 Whil thei haue poweer and domynacioun  
 Be tyrannye vse extorsioun,  
 Concludyng thus:\* that ther fals lyuyng  
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eendyng. 1484
- Indifferentli this tiraunt lecherous  
 Of wyues, maidenens maad non exceptioun,  
 Folwyng his lust, froward & disclaunderous,  
 Spared no womman of religioun. 1488  
 Made widwes breke ther professioun  
 Be violence; peise weel al this thyng,  
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eending.
- Most in [m]ordre he was contagious, [p. 425] 1492  
 Of innocent blood to make effusioun;  
 Vengable also ageyn al vertuous;  
 Ageyn his kynreede souhte occasioun  
 To slen the lyne fro which that he cam doun. 1496  
 Which considered, al suich fals werkyng  
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eending.
- Bochas manaceth princis outraious,  
 Which be ther proud hatful ambicioun, 1500  
 To God & man of wil contrarious,  
 Hauyng in herte a fals oppynyoun,  
 Al tho that been in ther subieccioun  
 Thei may deuoure, ther power so stretchyng, 1504  
 Which shal nat faille to haue an euel eendyng.
- Noble princis, ye that be desirous  
 To perseuere in your domynacioun,  
 And in al vertu to been victorious, 1508  
 Cherissheth trouthe, put falsnesse doun,  
 Beth merciabe, mesurid be resoun,  
 Of Andronicus the surfetes eschewyng,\*  
 That ye bi grace may haue a good eending. 1512

Bochas  
 exclaims  
 against  
 all tyrannous,  
 vicious princes,  
 and says that  
 justice requires  
 them to have  
 an evil end.

This lecherous  
 tyrant made  
 no exception  
 of wives and  
 maidenens, and  
 even oppressed  
 widows and  
 nuns.

He shed  
 innocent blood  
 and hated all  
 virtuous men.

Bochas  
 threatens such  
 outrageous  
 princes, proud  
 and contrary  
 to God, who  
 think they can  
 devour all men  
 who are subject  
 to them.

Noble Princes,  
 if you wish  
 to keep your  
 crowns, cherish  
 truth, put  
 down falseness  
 and be  
 merciful.

1480. And] *om.* R. 1483. thus] this B.

1489. widwes] widwes maidenys H, wyfes J.

1492. contagious] contrarious H, R 3. 1496. that] *om.* H.

1509. falsnesse] falsshede J, P.

1511. eschewyng] shewyng B, R, H 5.

[Off Isacyus made blynde & taken at mischeff.]<sup>1</sup>

Isaac then  
became  
emperor,  
but a brother  
of Andronicus  
clapped a red-  
hot basin to  
his face and  
blinded him.

**A**S is rehersed, whan Isacivs  
Had al thempire in pecessioun,  
Tauenge the deth[e] of Andronicus,  
Constantynople, in that roial toun, 1516  
A brother of his be force ther cam down  
With a bacyn, brennyng briht as gleede,  
Made hym blynde; of hym no mor I reede, —

He lay await  
for Isaac like  
a thief and,  
seizing him,  
put him in  
prison.

Except Isacivs was taken at myscheff 1520  
Of hym that wrouhte to his destruccioun;  
Liggyng await as doth a preue theeff,  
Took themperour, put hym in prisoun,  
Vengabli dide execusioun, 1524  
As is remembrid, with a bacyn briht,  
Brennyng red hot; and so he loste his siht.

Isaac's son  
Alexius  
expected  
to succeed,  
but he was  
murdered by  
his tutor.

A sone he hadde callid Alexivs,  
Tendre of age, cast hym to succede. 1528  
Bi his tutour, fals and contrarious,  
Moordred he was at myscheff, as I reede;  
The same tutour purposyng in deede  
Of thempire, be fals collusioun, 1532  
Be fraude & meede to haue pecessioun.

Savagetus,  
sultan of  
Egypt, then  
came in haste  
together with  
two mighty  
sultans of  
Damascus,  
piteously  
weeping.

In this chapitle of hym no mor I fynde  
Rehersed heer in ordre be writyng;  
But to myn auctour, be processe maketh mynde, 1536  
[¶] Ther cam in hast Sangot of Egipt kyng,  
And with hym cam pitousli weepyng  
Mihti princis, soudanys [bothe] tweyne,  
Regnyng in Damas, ther fallis to compleyne. 1540

The one was  
Salethus and  
the other  
Cathebadinus.

Of Allapie Salech was the ton,  
Regnyng in Damas of his deu[e] riht;  
Cathabadyn ther beyng eek soudon,  
Which in tho daies was holde a manli kniht 1544  
And riht notable in eueri mannys siht.  
And for the soudon of Babilon a-ferre  
Callid Saladyn oppressid was with werre,

1513. whan] than H. 1530. at myscheff he was H.  
1537. of Egipt Sangot in hast H — Sangor R, Sauagetus P  
(om. in hast). 1540. Damas] Sirie P.  
1541. Of] Of al H, R — Alopie J, Aloppe P.  
1543. Cathebaden P — ther] the R. 1546. a-ferre] of ferr R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 174 verso.

- For socour sente to thes princis tweyne, 1548  
 To come in haste with al ther cheualrie  
 Hym to supporte, and doon ther besi peyne  
 Enforce ther miht to susteene his partie.  
 Whos request thei list nat [to] denye; 1552  
 Abood no lenger, but made hemsiluen strong  
 To stonde with hym, wher it wer riht or wrong.
- Of this mateer the substauce to conclude,  
 Thes princis *cam*, Salech & Cadabadyn; 1556  
 For ther gverdoun thei fond ingratitude  
 In this forseid soudon Saladyn;  
 Founde hym vnkynde; pleynli this þe fyn, 1560  
 From ther estat, as it was aftir knowe,  
 Disgraded hem, brouht hem doun ful lowe.
- Of hym in soth thei hadde non oþer meede  
 For ther labour nor for ther kyndenesse.  
 What fill aftir, in Bochas I nat reede; 1564  
 For he foorthwith leueth this processe,  
 [¶] And vnto Robert doth his stile dresse,  
 Callid Ferentyn regnyng in Tarence,  
 Loste his lordshep be sodeyn violence: 1568
- This to seyne, he regned but a while;  
 This saide Robert loste his gouernaunce.  
 ¶ Next to Bochas *cam* Guilliam of Cicile,  
 Kyng of that contre, a lord of gret puissaunce; 1572  
 Loste his kyngdam thoruh Fortunis variaunce,  
 His eyen tweyne rent out of his hed;  
 Aftir deide in myscheef & in dreed.
- Which Guylliam regnyng in Cecile [p. 426] 1576  
 Was be discent[e] born nih of allie  
 To Robert Guiscart, as bookis do compile,  
 That whilom was duk of Normandie,  
 Which of his manhoode & gret policye,\* 1580  
 With his brothir, ful notable of renoun,  
 Brouhte al Naples to ther subieccioun.
- His brother name callid was Roggeer,  
 Which hadde a sone to been enheritour, 1584  
 Callid Tancret, as seith the cronicler;

1552. 10] *om.* J, P, R 3.

1561. Disgratid R.

R 3, H 5, Surrentine P.

B, R, J, H 5. *Supplied from H, which agrees with R 3.*

1556. Cathebadyn P.

1567. Forentyne R, Forentyn H,

1580] Gretli delityng in cheualrie

B, R, J, H 5. *Supplied from H, which agrees with R 3.*

- Roger had a son called Tancred, who reigned in Sicily, 1588
- Which took on hym to regne as successour.  
Thus in Cecile Tancret was *gouvernour*,  
Ageyn[e]s whom, be title souht a-ferre  
Of alliance began a mortal werre
- against whom a war was begun for the sake of Constance, Roger's daughter, who wanted to become a nun. 1592
- For a maide that callid was *Constance*,  
That douhtir was to this duk\* Rogeer,  
Which was set of spiritual plesauce  
To be religious, of hool hert & enteer.  
And be record off the cronicleer,  
This *Constance* hath the world forsake  
And to religioun hath hir bodi take. 1596
- It had been foretold that her marriage would cause the desolation of the kingdom. 1600
- Of this *Constance*, the silue same yeer  
That she was born, as maad is *mencioun*,  
Ther was a clerk, a gret astronomeer,  
Tolde of hir birthe be calculacioun,  
She sholde cause the desolacioun  
Of that kyngdam bi processe of hir age,  
Bi the occasioun oonli of mariage. 1604
- Enemies of Tancred moved Emperor Henry to take Constance out of her convent; and with the dispensation of the pope she was married, and Tancred put from his right. 1608
- Summe that wern to Tancret gret enemy,  
Be ther vngoodli excitacioun  
Meued themperour that callid was Herry  
To take *Constance* from hir religioun.  
And bi the popis dispensacioun  
She weddid was; themperour bi his myht  
Bi title of hire put Tancret from his riht. 1612
- For a long time however he withstood the emperor, but finally died of the pest, 1616
- With a gret noubre of Italiens  
Themperour entrid into that regioun;  
But be fauour off Siciliens,  
Tancret long tyme stood in pocessioun:  
But thoruh Fortunys *transmutacioun*,  
The same tyme, to conclud in sentence,  
The saide Tancret deide of pestilence. 1620
- and his young son William then resolved to defend the country. 1624
- His sone Guilliam, that was but yong *in deede*,  
With Siciliens cast hym nat to faille  
To keepe his lond and his riht posseede;  
Meete themperour with statli apparaille,  
Made hym reedi with hym to haue bataile.  
But themperour to gretter auantage  
Caste otherwise of fraude in his corage.

1588. whom] hom R. 1591. this duk] the kyng B, J, P.  
1593. &] om. R. 1594. cronyculer R. 1602. hir] his R, H.  
1603. the] of H. 1604. that] tyme R. 1612. into] in R.  
1617. pestilence] sentence R. 1622. haue] om. H.



- Feynyngli duryng this discord,  
 Themperour caste another wile,  
 Bi a fals colour to fallen at accord,  
 And yonge Guilliam vngoodly to beguyle; 1628  
 Vnder trete taken in Cecile,  
 Falsli depryued off his regioun,  
 Sent to Itaille and throwe in prisoun,  
 Be weie of trete, the stori who list see; 1632  
 Al concluded vndir fals tresoun.  
 With Guilliam take wer his sustres thre,  
 He perpetueli dampned to prisoun,\*  
 His eien put out for mor confusioun, 1636  
 Deied in pouert, lost his enheritaunce:  
 Loo, heer the fyn of worldly varyaunce!
- Ferther to write as Ihon Bochas began,  
 Aftir that Guilliam was put from his rewme, 1640  
 ¶ To hym appeered Guyot Lycynyan,  
 Chose afforn kyng of Iherusalem,—  
 Whos knihtli fame shon like the sonne-bem,—  
 Which bi his noblesse he whilom did atteyne, 1644  
 Godfrey present, that was duk of Loreyne.
- But bi the soudon namyd Saladyne  
 He was enchacid out of that dignite—  
 Al worldli pompe draweth to declyn!— 1648  
 So for the constreynt of his aduersite,  
 The yeeris passid of his prosperite,  
 Went into Cypre as a fugityff;  
 What fill afftir, I reede nat in his lyff. 1652
- ¶ To make his compleynt afftir hym cam oon  
 Which hadde stonde in gret perplexite,  
 Erl of Bryenne, & was callid Ihon,  
 Which aftirward was kyng of the cite 1656  
 Callid Iherusalem, and [had] also parde  
 A fair[e] douhtir, yong & tendre of age,  
 Ioyned aftir to Frederik in mariage.
- Be yng that tyme lord and emperour, [p. 427] 1660  
 Was desirous aboff al othir thyng  
 Of Iherusalem to be gouernour

But the emperour, under colour of a treaty, deprived him of his kingdom and threw him into prison,

where his eyes were put out and he died.

After William, Guy de Lusignan, king of Jerusalem, appeared, a knightly man,

whom Saladin chased out of his realm; and he became a fugitive in Cyprus. I do not know what happened afterwards.

John, Earl of Brienne and king of Jerusalem, had a fair daughter who married Emperor Frederick II.,

but John, instead of keeping his kingdom of Jerusalem

1626. caste] cast all H, R 3, P.

1634. sustren R. 1635, 36 are transposed in B, R, J, H 5, P.

1641. Guido Lusignan P.

1651, 52 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

and becoming  
king of Sicily,  
as he desired,  
was made a  
captain of  
mercenaries in  
Lombardy.

And of Cecile to be crownid kyng;  
Which aldirlast, for his sotil werkyng 1664  
Constreyned was, doun fro that partie,  
To be a capteyn for soud in Lumbardie.

[Off Herry the eldest sone of Frederyk the  
secounde myscheued by his Fadir.]<sup>1</sup>

Henry, eldest  
son of the  
Emperor Fred-  
erick II., lame  
and ill, thin  
and pale from  
imprisonment,  
came complain-  
ing to Bochas.

**N**EXT to Bochas, crokid, halt & sik,  
Oon callid Herry cam for to compleyne, 1668  
The eldest sone onto Frederik,  
Which bi seeknesse hadde felt gret peyne,  
Megre and pale, contract in eueri veyne,  
Of whos langour the cheef occasioun 1672  
Was that he lay so long tyme in prisoun.

His adversity  
was caused by  
his father's  
perverse cruelty.

Al his disese and gret aduersite  
Icausid was, for short conclusioun,  
Bi his fadris froward cruelte, 1676  
As Bochas aftir maketh mencioune.  
And this Herry bi generacioun  
Sone to Frederik, lik as it is founde, —  
I meene Frederik callid the secounde. 1680

First king of  
Sicily and of  
Jerusalem, his  
renoun shone.

This saide Herry be discent of lyne  
Of Cicile first was crownid kyng,  
And of Iherusalem, whos renoun dide shyne  
Thoruh many a lond[e] at his begynnyng; 1684  
And Fortune also in hir werkyng  
Was to this Herry, passyngli notable  
In al his werkis, inly fauourable.

He was affable  
and constant  
and popular  
among the  
people; but

Off his persone had this auantage: 1688  
To al the people he was riht acceptable,  
Weel comendid in his flouryng age,  
Of cheer and face and look riht amiable,  
And of his port verray demuer & stable, 1692  
Callid in his gynnyng, such fauour he hath wonne,  
Of princis alle verray liht & sonne.

it often  
happens that  
a cloudy day  
follows a  
bright morning,

But ofte it fallith, that a glad morwenyng,  
Whan Phebus sheweth his bemys cleer & briht, 1696  
The day sumtyme, therupon folwyng,

1666. To be] been H. 1681. This] The H.  
1687. inly] & inly H, R. 1690. his] this R.  
1695. mornyng H, J, morning P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 175 b.

- With sum dirk skie is clipsid of his liht;  
 And semblabli, thoruh Fortunys myht  
 This saide prince, bi hir fals variaunce 1700  
 Fond in hir wheel ful noious fell greuaunce.
- Who may the furies of Fortune appese,  
 Hir troubli wawes to make hem calm & pleyn;  
 Wher men most truste thei fynde most disese, 1704  
 Wher double corages stonde in noun certeyn.  
 A shynyng day is ofte meynt with reyn:  
 Thus of Frederik the grete vnstabilnesse  
 Hath brouht his sone in myscheef & distresse. 1708
- This Frederik set up in gret fauour  
 Be the popis dilligent bisynesse,  
 Vnto thestat lefft up of emperour;  
 But thoruh his hatful froward vnkyndenesse, 1712  
 Of couetise fill into suich\* excesse,  
 Took upon hym patrymonye to guie,  
 Of Cristes chersch that part to occupie.
- Fill in the popis indignacioun,  
 Counsail nor trete myhte not\* auaille,  
 But of malis and [fals] presumpcioun  
 Caste with the pope to haue a gret bataile.  
 The saide Herry his fadir gan counsaille, 1720  
 Ageyn the chersch to do no violence  
 But hym submytte *with* humble obedience.
- This striff enduryng atween thes gret estatis,  
 Frederik made his sone be accusid 1724  
 To hym of crym, *Illese Magestatis*,  
 Wolde nat suffre he sholde been excusid;  
 But lik a man maliciousli refusid,  
 Be his fadris cursid fals tresoun 1728  
 He was comaundid to deien in prisoun.
- Summe bookis sey[e]n he was take & brouht  
 To his fadir of doom to ha[ue] sentence,  
 But lik a man passid sorwe & thouht, 1732  
 Which to his lyff hadde non aduertence,  
 Furiousli and *with* gret violence,

and no one can allay the troubled wawes of Fortune. The great inconstancy of Frederick brought him to distress.

Frederick, made emperor by the pope, became so covetous that he took upon himself the management of the church's patrimony, and

thereby incurring the pope's enmity, determined to make war on him. Herry advised his father to do no violence to the church,

and for this advice Frederick accused him of *lese majesté* and threw him into prison.

Some books say that when he was brought in sorrow to his father for judgment, his horse fell down and he broke his neck.

1700. prince] princesse H.

1704. most truste] trust most R.

1713. into suich] in suich in B. 1715. part to] party forto R.

1717. not] non B, noon J, R 3, none P.

1720. The] And the R.

1725. Lesæ Maiestatis P.

As he was lad, alas, on hors[e]bak,  
His hors fill down & so his nekke he brak. 1736

Other books  
rehearse that  
he died in  
prison after  
long confine-  
ment,  
and that he  
tumbled off a  
bridge and  
was drowned.

Summe bookis rehearse of hym & seyn,  
His fadir took geyn hym occasioun;  
And whan he hadde longe in cheynis leyn,  
At gret myscheeff he deied in prisoun. 1740  
And summe sey[e]n [how] that he fill doun  
Of a bregge, Bochas reherseth heer,  
And drownid was in a deep ryueer.

¶ Bochas makith a comendacion of trewe love  
a-tween kynrede.<sup>1</sup> [p. 428]

Bochas  
commends all  
such as are  
naturally  
disposed to be  
upright to  
their kindred.

**N**EXT in ordre myn auctour did his cure 1744  
To make a special comendacio[u]n  
Of swich as been disposid be nature  
An[d] bi ther kyndli inclynacioun,  
As blood requereth and generacioun, 1748  
Taquite hymself in thouht, in will, in deede,  
Witbout feynyng onto ther kynrede.

Especially when  
no unkindness  
is found in  
them, in spite  
of adversity,  
and when they  
are merciful  
and sincere.

Specialli that non vnkynd[e]nesse  
Be founde in them for non aduersite;  
To considre, of naturel gentillesse 1752  
To them approprid is merci & pite;  
And tauoide the fals duplicite  
That was in Frederik, which so vnkynd[e]li 1756  
Leet slen his sone that callid was Herry.

Pity is a  
natural trait,  
and parents  
are bound by  
law, nature  
and reason to  
foster their  
children and

Pite is approprid to kynrede,  
Fader and mooder be disposicioun 1760  
To cherissh the childre & [eke] feede  
Til seuene yeer passe, lawe maketh mencioun,  
As thei are bounde of nature and\* resoun.  
That tyme passid, ther tendirnesse tenclyne  
Vnto fourtene\* to\* vertuous disciplyne. 1764

1736. he] *om.* R. 1741. how] *om.* J — that] *be* H.  
1749. in thouht in will] in will in thouht H, in wil thouht R 3  
— 2nd and 3rd in] *om.* J — 3rd in] & R 3 — in thought,  
wil, & dede P.  
1760. eke] *om.* H, R, R 3.  
1762. As] And as J, P — nature and] naturel B, natural J.  
1764. fourtene] Fortune B, J — to] *be* B, bi R, R 3, J, by P.

<sup>1</sup> The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 175 verso: "A comendacion of Bochas of suche as be kynde to their kynrede."

- Than afftirward in ther adolescence,  
Vertuousli to teche hem & chastise,  
Norissh hem in doctryne & science,  
Fostre in vertu vices to despise,  
To be curteis, sad, prudent & wise;  
For whan thei gynne with vertu in that age,  
Gladli aftir, thei do non outrage.
- As it longeth to euery gentil lyne,  
And blood roial, be kyndli influence,  
To fader, mooder shewe hymself benigne,  
Of humble herte don hem reuerence,  
Ay to remembre in ther aduertence  
On sexe princis wrouhte the contrarie,  
For which Fortune was ther aduersarie.
- Euerich to other founde was vnkynde;  
In cursid blood may be no kyndenesse;  
Of oon tarage sauoureth tre & rynde,  
The frut also bert[h] of the tre witsesse;  
And semblabli the fadris cursidnesse,  
With mortal suerd, in nature repreuable,  
Ageyn the child is ofte seyn vengable.
- ¶ Among[es] which Brutus is reknid oon,  
Next in ordre folweth Manlius,  
Slouh ther childre be record euerichon;  
Phelipp Manlius & also Cassius,  
And cruel Heroude, fell and malicious;  
Frederik also most vengabli  
Slouh his sone that callid was Herry.
- This Frederik beyng ay contrarye  
Toward his sone, nat gracious nor benigne,  
From hooli cherche vngoodli he gan varie  
And therageyn[es] frowardli maligne;  
And lik a man obstynat & vndigne  
Deied a-cursid thoruh mysgouernaunce,  
Withoute confessioun outhere repentaunce.
- to teach them  
virtue dur-  
ing their  
adolescence.
- 1768
- 1772 Every gentle  
line and all  
royal blood  
should shew  
filial reverence;  
but there were  
six princes who  
wrought the  
contrary.
- 1776
- 1780 Each was cruel  
to his children.  
There may be  
no kindness in  
cursed blood.
- 1784
- 1788 These princes  
were Brutus,  
Manlius, Philip  
Manlius,  
Cassius,  
Herod and  
Frederick; and
- 1792
- 1796 this Frederick,  
who was  
neither  
gracious  
nor benign to  
his son, and  
who maligned  
against  
holy church,  
died accursed,  
without con-  
fession or  
repentance.

1768. Fostre] fostre hem H.

1772. H writes 1723 at beginning of this stanza but indicates cor-  
rection with "vacat."

1779. was founde R. 1790. Herodes P.

[How Manfroy kyng of Poyle was slayn.]<sup>1</sup>

Manfred, king of Naples, was put down and slain for his tyranny: what avails sceptre or sovrantry to a tyrant?

¶ Nexe to Bochas of Poille *cam* þe kyng, 1800  
 Began his fall and compleynt specefie,  
 Callid Manfroy; and for his fals werking  
 Put down & slayn, cause of his tirannye.  
 Loo, what auailleth sceptre or regalie 1804  
 To a tiraunt, which of violence  
 List to Godward haue non aduertence!

[How Encys kyng of Sardany died in prisoun.]<sup>2</sup>

Enzio, king of Sardinia, was conquered by the people of Bologna and died in prison.

¶ With look[e] doun-cast, dedli pale of cheere,  
 Of Sardania Encis next *cam* doun; 1808  
 Kyng of that lond, to telle the maneere  
 How he werreied ageyn the mihti toun  
 Callid Bononia, to his confusioun;  
 Be them venquissed, & *with* cheynys rounde, 1812  
 Deied in prisoun, so long he lay ther bounde.

[a water makith theves blynde & trewe men to see.]<sup>3</sup>

John Bochas says that in Sardinia there are no serpents and wolves, but that there is a well whose water makes thieves blind, and is a medicine to honest folk.

¶ Folwyng myn auctour callid Bochas Iohn,  
 In Sardynia, as he maketh mynde,  
 Serpent nor wolff in al that lond is\* non, 1816  
 Hauyng a welle, which of veray kynde  
 Theuys eyen the watir maketh blynde;  
 To trewe folk, as he doth diffyne,  
 Water therof is helthe and medecyne. 1820

[An erbe who tastith it shal die lauhying.]<sup>4</sup>

There is also an herb that makes people laugh themselves to death if they taste of it; even to touch it is dangerous.

Ther groweth also an herbe, as bookis seie, [p. 429]  
 Which that is so dyuers of nature,  
 Who tasteth therof lauhhyng he shal deie,  
 No medecyne may helpe hym\* nor recure; 1824  
 The touch therof stant eek in auenture, —

1800. Poille] Naples P.

1802. Maufron H, Manfrede P.

1808. Encius P. 1816. is] was B, H.

1819. folk] farlk R — diffyne] dyuyne J, devyne R 3, diuine P.

1824. hym] hem B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

<sup>3</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

<sup>4</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

Yiff it entre his mouth in any side,  
He shal alyue for lauh tre nat abide.

[Another Frederyk was slayn bi Iugement of his  
brothir.]<sup>1</sup>

<p>¶ Ther was anothir froward Frederik, Sone to Alfonse, that was kyng of Castile, Of corage wood and [also] fren[e]tik; His owne brothir falsli to begile, Began a werre lastyng but a while, Whos purpos was his brother to deceyue And the crowne of Castile to resceyue.</p>	<p>1828 Another froward Frederick, son of Alphonse of Castile, made war on his brother for the sake of the crown;</p>
<p>This Frederik cam with a gret bataile Ageyn his brother for the same entent; Off his purpos yit he dide faille: God nor Fortune wer nat of assent. Take in the feeld[e] and be iugement Of his brothir, for his gret trespace Slay[e]n openli; gat no bettir grace.</p>	<p>1832</p> <p>1836 but neither God nor Fortune were with him. He was captured and slain.</p> <p>1840</p>

[How Manymettus and Argones died at mischef.]<sup>2</sup>

<p>[¶] Manymettus, of Perce lord and kyng, Cam next in pres, distressid <i>with</i> gret peyne, Vpon Fortune pitousli pleynyng, His aduersite did hym so constreyne; For ther was oon which did at hym disdeyne Callid Argoones, void of title or lyne, Geyn Manymet[tus] proudli gan maligne.</p>	<p>1844 Maumetus, king of Persia, came in great distress, com- plaining on Fortune; for Argones was hostile to him without cause.</p>
<p>Which Argones for his presumpcioun Take at mischeef be sodeyn violence, His doom was youe to deien in prison, Of noun power to make resistance; But Fortune, that can no difference In hir* chaunges atwixen freend &amp; foo, Caused hem to deie at myscheef bothe two.</p>	<p>1848</p> <p>1852 However, for his pre- sumption Argones was captured and sent to prison to die there, and Maumetus also died at mischief.</p>

1830. also] *om.* R.

1842. Maumetus P. 1848. Maumetus P.

1853. difference] *diffence* R. 1854. hir] his B, H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

[How Charles kyng of Jerusalem and of Cecile for  
Auaryce and avoutrie died at mischef.]<sup>1</sup>

Noble Charles,  
king of  
Jerusalem and  
Sicily, came  
with such  
good cheer and  
knightly  
manner to  
Bochas,

**A**FFTIR thes forseid, rehersed in sentence, 1856  
As Bochas procedeth\* in his stile,  
Kam noble Charlis unto his presence,  
Kyng of Iherusalem and also of Cicile;  
Of whos comyng myn auctour a gret while 1860  
Astonid was, to seen his knihtli face  
With so good cheere com into the\* place.

that it seemed  
as if he stood  
high on  
Fortune's  
wheel, defying  
her power.

For bi his port, who that beheeld hym weel,  
Considred first his look & his visage, 1864  
It sempte he trad upon Fortunys wheel,  
And of his noble marcial corage  
Hadde of hir poweer getyn auauntage,  
Shewyng hym-silf so fressh on ech partie, 1868  
Hir and hir myht did vttyrly diffye.

Of royal  
lineage and  
famous alliance,  
he was brother  
of St. Louis;

First to comende his roial hih lynage,  
And of his vertuous famous allyaunce,  
As be wrytyng and preisyng with langage 1872  
The name of hym specialli tauaunce,  
Seith he was bor[e]n of the blood of Fraunce;  
And to encrece mor souereynli his prys,  
Writ he was brother onto Seynt Lowis. 1876

and I also  
read that, as  
Phoebus  
outshines all  
the other  
spheres, so  
does France  
surpass all  
other lands  
both in peace  
and war.

Gaff to France this comendacioun:  
So as Phebus passeth ech othir sterre,  
Riht so that kyngdam in comparisoun  
Passeth eueri lond, bothe nih & ferre, 1880  
In policie, be it of pes or werre;  
For it transcendith, in pes be providence,  
And in werre be knihtli excellence.

These  
words were  
not written by  
Bochas, but by  
one Laurence,  
the translator of  
this book, to  
commend  
France.

Thes woordis be nat take out of myn auctour,— 1884  
Entitled heer for a remembraunce  
Bi oon Laurence, which was a translatour  
Of this processe, to comende Fraunce;  
To preise that lond set al his plesaunce, 1888

1856. Afftir] Whan H, R 3 — in] was in H, R 3.

1857. procedeth] reherseth B.

1862. com into the] komen into B, R. 1864. &] om. H.

1867. hir] his H. 1872. with] bi H, of J, P.

1877. this] his R. 1882. in pes be] bi pes of H.

1886. a] om. H. 1887. this] his R.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 176 recto.



- Seith influence of that roial lond  
Made Charlis so worthi of his hond.
- Of whos noblesse Pope Vrban hadde ioie,  
Hym to encrece for vertuous luyng, 1892 Pope Urban  
Which that tyme was duk of Aungoie, also had joy  
Aftir chose of Cicile to be kyng. in Charles, and  
Of Pope Vrban requered be writyng, while he was  
Toward Rome that he shold hym dresse 1896 Duke of Anjou  
Of kyng Manfroy the tirannye toppresse. asked him to  
come to Rome
- Ageyn the pope and hooli cherchis riht  
This same Manfroy dide gret extorsioun. and defend the  
Noble Charlis, as Goddis owne kniht, 1900 church against  
Cam with strong hond up to Roome toun; King Manfred.  
Which in his komyng gaf pcessioun Charles came  
To Guyot Maunfort for to haue the garde with Guy de  
In his passage and gouerne the vaunwarde. 1904 Montfort,
- Toward Roome with gret ordenaunce [p. 430] leading many  
Thei passed ouer the boundis of Itaille; a strong  
This manly kniht, this Charlis born in France, company, and  
Ladde with hym many strong bataille found small  
The popis enmy manli for tassaille. 1908 resistance.
- But al this while, to stonden at diffence  
The said[e] Charlis fond no resistence.
- Entryng Roome to be ther protectour, 1912 Entering Rome  
Ful weel resceyuyd at his first entryng, he was chosen  
Chose and preferrid for cheef senatour chief senator  
Bi the pope, most glad of his komyng; by the pope,  
Of Cicile was aftir crownid kyng, and afterwards  
1916 crowned king  
And of Iherusalem, as maad is mencio[u]n, of Sicily and  
Graunted to hym fulli pcessioun. Jerusalem.
- Which in his gynnyng bar hym tho so weel,  
Entryng that lond with knihtly apparaille, 1920 After taking  
Of Cassyne gat first the strong castel, Monte Cassino,  
At Bonnevente hadde a gret bataille, he fought a  
With kyng Manfroy, whos parti did[e] faille. great battle at  
To reherse shortli his auenture, Benevento,  
1924  
Charlis on hym made a disconfiture.

1899. same] saide H.

1903. Monforth R, Maufruit H, Manfort J (Guido of Mount-  
fort P).

1904. vawarde H, vawward P.

1906. ouer] wer H, R 3. 1910. stonden] stoden H.

1921. Cassile R. 1922. Beneuent P. 1925. made] had H.

- where Manfred was slain.  
He then put down a rebellion in Sicily and
- In which[e] bataile kyng Manfroy was slayn;  
And noble Charlis took pocessioun,  
Wherof Romeyns wer ful glad & fayn. 1928  
Yit in Cicile ther was rebellioun,  
But thei wer brouht onto subieccioun.  
Than\* Coradyn, record of old writing,  
Sone of Conrade cleymed to be kyng. 1932
- at Talliazzo defeated and slew Conradin, son of Conrad IV., who claimed the throne.
- Gan make hym strong, proudli took his place  
At Aligate, a famous old cite.  
Noble Charlis with knihtli cheer & face  
Fill upon hym, made hym for to flee. 1936  
And to sette reste in the contre,  
Tauoide trouble & make al thing certayn,  
Gaff iugement Coradyn to be slayn.
- Charles then had entire possession of Sicily, and
- Among kinges notable and glorious, 1940  
Charlis was put, as maad is menciou, n,  
Lik a prince strong and victorious  
In ful pesible and hool pocessioun  
Of Cicile and al that regioun, 1944  
Ageyn[e]s whom was non dissobeissaunce,  
Yolde of hool herte to his gouernaunce.
- Fortune favoured him.  
His son married Mary, daughter of Stephen of Hungary;
- Be title also off his alliaunce,  
Fortune gretli did hym magnefie; 1948  
For as it is Iput in remembraunce,  
The noble princesse that callid was Marye,  
Douhtir to Steuene regnyng in Hungrye,  
Iioyned was and knet in mariage 1952  
To Charlis sone, tencres of his lynage.
- and by the authority of the pope Charles was made king of Jerusalem.
- The same Charlis be auctorite  
Of the pope, so as hym list ordeyne,  
Was eek maad kyng of the gret cite 1956  
Callid Iherusalem, of touns most souereyne;  
Be which[e] title he bar crownis tweyne.
- His brother Louis
- His brothir Lewis, olde bookis seye,  
The same tyme in Egipt gan werreye. 1960  
Gat al the contrees abouten envirooun,  
Which that Sarsyns did falsli occupie;

1930. onto] to R.

1931. Than] Yit B, R, J, P, H 5 — Corandyne J, Conradine P.

1934. Agliate H, Talliatozzo P — an olde famous R, H, R 3, H 5.

1942, 43 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

1945. no disbeissaunce R. 1950. princesse] processe R.

1951. Stephene P. 1952. knet] knet was R.

- Brouht hem ageyn[e] to subieccioun  
Of Iherusalem, that lond to magnefie:  
Cartage in Affrik, with al ther regalie,  
And alle the contrees beyng afforn contrarye,  
To kyng Charlis becam tributarye.
- Thus\* while he sat hiest in his glorie,  
Lik Phebus shynyng in his mydday speere,  
With many conquest and many gret victorie,  
Whan his noblesse shon most briht & cleere,  
The same tyme, with a frownyng cheere,  
Fortune gan from Charlis turne hir face  
And hym berafte his fauour and his grace.
- This lady Fortune doth\* seelde in oon contune,  
She is so gerissch of condicioun,  
A sorceresse, a traitour in comune,  
Caste a fals mene to his destruccioun,  
Oon of his sonys slay[e]n with poison,  
Which did eclipse, myn auctour doth expresse,  
A ful gret part of [al] his old gladnesse.
- He was disclaundrid of the grete\* vice  
Which apparteneth onto tirannye,  
I meene the vice of froward auarice,  
Which is contrarie gretli to cheualrie;  
Diffamed also of fals auoutrie,  
Which was susteened thoruh his meyntenance  
Witbynne that lond[e] be a kniht of Fraunce.
- The same kniht abidyng in his hous,  
Al Cicile troublid with that deede:  
The grete offence was so disclaundrous,  
Thoruh al the regioun that it began to spreede;  
For thilke woman, pleynli as I reede,  
Was wyff to oon which suffred this offence  
And to be vengid dide his dilligence.
- Iohn Prosithe pleynli was his name,  
Which cast hym fulli auengid for to be,  
That kyng Charlis sholde ber the blame,  
Slen al Frensh-men that bood in that contre,  
Withoute grace, merci or pite.

1964 conquered the Saracen countries about Egypt, and all became tributary to Charles.

1968 But when he sat highest in his glory, Fortune turned her face away from him.

1972

1976 She is a sorceress, a traitress to men, and seldom continues in one. A son of Charles was poisoned, and

1980

1984 he himself accused of avarice and defamed of adultery committed at his court by a French knight

1988

[p. 431] with the wife of John of Procida, who determined to be revenged,

1992

1996 and that King Charles might bear the blame, instigated a massacre of all the Frenchmen in the country.

2000

1965. ther] be H. 1968. Thus] This B, J.  
1975. doth] did B. 1979. his] om. R. 1981. al] om. R.  
1982. the grete] al the B, R, J, H 5. 1988. that] be H.  
1993. thilke] thirk R — I] om. R. 1995. dide his] he did R.  
1996. Procida P.

The king of  
Aragon was  
called in, and

And for to doon ful execucioun  
Requered was the kyng of Arragoun.

Charles lost  
Sicily and  
Jerusalem, and  
became so  
poor that he  
prayed for  
death.

Loste of Cicile al hool the regioun  
With the obeissaunce of many gret cite,\* 2004  
And of Iherusalem the pocessioun;  
Fill be processe in gret aduersite,  
And last, constreynd with greuous pouerte,  
To God most meekli, with ful heuy cheere, 2008  
Soone to be ded[e]; this was his praieere.

He grew sick  
and languished  
until he fell  
into age and  
finally died.  
There is no  
more about  
him.

Supprised he was with sorwe in his corage;  
Loste his force; fill into malladie;  
Languissed foorth til he gan falle in age, 2012  
Ageyn Fortune fond no remedie.  
And be thoccasioun of fals auoutrie  
Fill to myscheeff; and for sorwe & dreed  
This Charlis deide; no mor of hym I reede. 2016

### ¶ Lenvoye.

Just as  
Phœbus is often  
darkened after  
a bright  
morning, so  
it was with  
Charles. Men  
do not praise  
the fair day  
until eve.

**L**YK as Phebus in sum fressh morwenyng  
Aftir Aurora þe day doth clarefie,  
Fallith ofte that his briht shynyng  
Idirkid is with sum cloudi skie: 2020  
A liknesse shewed in this tragedie,  
Expert in Charlis, the stori doth weel preeue,  
Youthe & age reknid ech partie,  
The faire day men do preise at eue. 2024

He was  
nearly related  
to St. Louis,  
wise, manly,  
virtuous and a  
flower of  
chivalry, until  
adultery came  
into his  
court.

The noble fame of his fressh gynnyng, —  
To Seyn[t] Lowis he was nih of allie, —  
Riht wis, riht manli, riht vertuuous of lyuyng,  
Callid of knihthod flour of cheualrie, 2028  
Til meyntenaunce of auout[e]rie  
Cam into his court to hurte his name & greue,  
His lyff, his deth[e] put in iupartie:  
The faire day men do preise at eue. 2032

Lik desertis men haue ther guerdonyng:  
Vertuuous lyff doth princis magnefie;  
The contrarie to them is gret hyndryng, —

2003. the] that R. 2004. cite] contre B.

2017. mornyng H, J, H 5, morning P.

2023. ech] his R — partie] truly J.

2024. day] lady R — do] doto R. 2026. Seynt] om. H.

2028. 1st of] for H.

Folk expert the trouthe may nat denye. 2036 Men are rewarded according to their deserts; and what is the reward of lechery?  
 Cerche out the reward of cursid lecherye:  
 Where it is vsed, the houshold may nat *preue*;  
 In this mateer to Charlis hath an iye,  
 The faire day to preise toward eue. 2040

Noble Princis, all vices eschewyng,  
 Your hih corages lat resoun modefe;  
 Witbdrawe your hand fro riotous wachching;  
 Fleeth flessfli lustis and vicious companye; 2044 oppress no man and assist the poor. Let men report your prudent policy when your age draws to eve.  
 Oppressith no man; doth no tyrannye;  
 Socoure the needi; poore folk doth releuee;  
 Lat men reporte the prudent policie  
 Of your last age whan it draweth to eue. 2048

[Off Hugolyne erle of Pyse slayn in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

OFF Charlis story rad þe woful *fyn*,  
 As ye haue herd þe *maner* & the guise,  
 To Ihon Bochas appeered Hugolyn,  
 Callid whilom the noble Erl of Pise, 2052 Ugolino, earl of Pisa, was slain in prison by his subjects, who arose against him  
 Til the Pisanys gan ageyn hym rise;\*  
 Most vengably, cruel & vnkynde,  
 Slouh hym in prisoun; no mor of hym I fynde, —

[Athon kyng of Ar[me]nye / put from his ri[ght] by his brothire.]<sup>2</sup>

Sauff his childre, of hatreede and envie, 2056 and slew his children also. Aiton, king of Armenia, a famous Christian prince who fought the Tatars, was  
 Wer moord[e]rid eek in a deep prisoun.  
 ¶ Next with his compleynt the kyng of Armenye  
 Cam tofor Bochas, that callid was Achoun,  
 A Cristene prince ful famous of renoun; 2060  
 For our feith, from which he list nat erre,  
 Geyn Tartarynes long tyme he heeld gret werre.

2045. doth] do H.

2050. As] as her H. 2053. rise] hem arise B.

2055. mor of hym I ne fynde H.

2056. hatreede] malis H, malice R 3.

2057. is misplaced at end of stanza H — eek] also R.

2058. The paragraph mark is misplaced at the beginning of the next line in B — Armony R.

2059. Aiton P.

2062. Tantarynes H, Tartarians P, Tartaryens H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 177 recto.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 177 recto, margin pared by binder.

treasonably  
robbed of the  
throne by his  
brother Sabath,  
who cast him  
in prison and  
blinded him.

This manli kyng, in kniethod ful famous, [p. 432]  
It was shewed, his stori who list reede, 2064  
Hadde a brother fell and despitous  
Callid Sabath, desirous to succede,  
Stede of his brother the kyngdam to posseede;  
Be fals[e] tresoun reued hym of his riht, 2068  
Kept hym in hold[e] and put out his siht.

But another  
brother chased  
Sabath from  
the eountry  
and, capturing  
him, cast him  
in prison,  
where he died.  
Lo, how the  
Lord can  
reward treason  
and murder!

This Sabath loste bothe happ & grace,  
His other brother, as maad is mencion,  
Be strong hond[e] put hym from his place, 2072  
Chacid hym out of that regioun.  
Take be force and fetrid in prisoun,  
Deide ther; no man list hym visite:  
Loo, how God can tresoun and moordre quite! 2076

[How pope Boniface the viij<sup>th</sup> was take by the  
Lynage de Columpnys / ete his hondes & died  
in prisoun.]<sup>1</sup>

About the  
year 1300, Pope  
Boniface the  
Eighth

**A**MONG thes woful froward princis thre  
Which shewed hem so ougli of þer chere,  
Pope Boniface be gret aduersite,  
Eihte of that name, gan taproche neer. 2080  
A thousand thre hundred acountid was þe yeer  
Fro Cristes berthe be computacioun,  
Whan that he made his lamentacioun.

laid an  
interdict on all  
France;

This same pope kauhte occasioun, 2084  
Which vndir Petir kepte gouernaunce,  
To interdicte\* al the regioun,  
Tyme of kyng Phelipp regnyng þer in France;  
Directe bollis down into Constaunce 2088  
To Nicholas, maad[e] be Boniface,  
Archidekne of the same place.

but the prelates  
and bishops of  
France proved  
that he injured  
the church, and

Off hooli cherche the prelatis nih echon,  
Bisshoppis of Fraunce felli haue declarid, 2092  
Preuyng be poyntis many mo than oon  
In a gret seen[e] pleynli & nat spared,

2063. ful] most H. 2076. moordre & tresoun H — tresoun]  
reson R.

2077. thre] iij B. 2080. taproche] approche R.

2081. hundred] C B — was] om. R.

2086. interdicte] Interducte B, Entirdite H.

2088. into] vn to H. 2091. nih] nyth R.

2094. seene] sene R, H, H 5, R 3, synne J, Scene P.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 177 verso.

- Be hym the cherche was hurt & nat reparid;  
 Put on hym crymes of gret misgouernaunce, 2096  
 Denouncid\* hym enmy to al the lond of France.
- Put [up]on hym many gret outrage,  
 Wrongli how he hadde doon offence  
 To a cardynal born of the lynage 2100  
 De Columpnis, a kynreede of reuerence;  
 For which[e] cause he kept hym in absence  
 Out of the court, drouh wher he was born;  
 Be which occasioun the pope his lif hath lorn. 2104
- De Columpnis the lynage hath so wrouht:  
 Took Boniface for his old cruelte;  
 With gret poweer & force thei haue hym brouht  
 Into a castel which stood in the cite, 2108  
 Callid Sancti Angeli; gaf auctorite  
 To a cardynal, & be commyssioun  
 Power to doon ful execusioun.
- Of thes mateeris hangyng in ballaunce 2112  
 Atween parties, wer it riht or wrong,  
 Bothe of Romeyns, prelatis eek of France,  
 The pope ay kept withynne the castel strong,  
 Of auenture, nat bidyng ther riht long, 2116  
 Fill in a flux, and aftirward for neede,  
 For hunger eet his hondis, as I reede.
- Hour of his deyng, it is maad mencioun,  
 Aboute the castel was merueillous lihtnyng, 2120  
 Wher the pope lay fetrid in prisoun, —  
 Non such afforn was seyn in ther lyuyng.  
 And whil Bochas was besi in writyng,  
 To write the fall[e] of this Boniface, 2124  
 The Ordre of Templaris cam toforn his face.

denounced him  
as an enemy  
of the country.

They accused  
him of many  
outrages,  
especially of  
wronging a  
cardinal of the  
house of  
Colonna,

whose  
family took  
Boniface and  
imprisoned him  
in the fortress  
of St. Angelo,

where he fell  
in a flux  
and afterwards  
ate his hands  
for hunger.

It is said that  
marvellous  
lightning  
played  
about the  
castle when he  
died.

[How the ordre of Templers was founded and  
 [Iaques] with other of the ordre brent.]<sup>1</sup>

¶ Croniclars the trouthe can recorde,  
 Callyng to mynde the first fundacioun,  
 And olde auctours therwithal accorde, 2128

2097. Denouncid] Denouncyng B, R, H 5, J.

2108. the] their H. 2113. it] it be H, R 3.

2121. the] this H, R 3. 2125. afforn R.

MS. J. leaf 177 verso. Iaques is supplied from P.

- The Order of Templars was founded at the time when Godfrey de Bouillon won Jerusalem, by certain knights who fought there.
- Of thes Templeeris how the religioun  
Gan thilke tyme whan Godfrey Bolliou  
Hadde wonne, that noble knihtli man,  
Iherusalem, that ordre first began. 2132
- Bi certeyn knihtis which did her besi peyne,  
Whan the said[e] cite was first wonne  
Be noble Godfrey, duk whilom of Loreyne,  
Ther crownid kyng, this ordre thei begonne, — 2136  
Olde bookis weel reherse konne, —  
Takyng a ground of pouert & meeknesse,  
To founde this ordre did her besynesse.
- Their guiding principles were poverty, humility and chastity, and they lived in the temple not far from the city.
- Ther begynnyng cam of deuocioun, 2140  
The ground Itake of wilful pouerte;  
And made first ther habitacioun  
Be the temple, nat ferr fro the cite,  
In tokne of clennessse sworn to chastite, 2144  
Of the temple lik to ther desirs  
Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.
- Pope Honorius gave them license to wear a white habit, to which Eugenius added a red cross.
- Pope Honorie gaff hem\* auctorite, [p. 433]  
Of hooli cherche beyng that tyme hed; 2148  
A whiht habit thei bar for chastite;  
Eugenivs afftir gaf hem a cros of red.  
And to diffende pilgrymes, out of dreed,  
Geyn Saresyn[e]s thoruh ther hih renoun, 2152  
This was cheef poynt of ther professioun.
- So long as they lived in perfection their fame spread;
- Whil thei lyuede in wilful pouerte,  
Thes crossid knihtis in mantlis clad of whiht,  
Ther name spradde in many ferr contre; 2156  
For in perfeccioun was set al ther deliht.  
Folk of deuocioun kauht an appetiht  
Them for tencrece, gaf hem gret almesse,  
Bi which thei gan encrece in gret richesse. 2160
- but as they increased in numbers and wealth they lost their virtue and gave themselves up to luxury and vice.
- Bi processe withynne a fewe yeeris,  
The noubre gret of ther religioun;  
And the fame of thes seid Templeeris  
Gan spreede wide in many regioun. 2164  
Ther sodeyn risyng, of ther pocessioun,  
With touns, castellis, thei gaf hem to delices,  
Appalled in vertu, which brouht in many vices.

2136. thei] first H.

2156. name] names H.

2162. ther] that R.

2147. hem] hym B.

2160. encrece] wexe H 5.

2165. Ther] þe H.



- It wer to longe for to rekne hem alle;  
 But among other I fynde ther was oon,  
 A manli kniht, folk\* Iaques did hym calle,  
 Gret of auctorite among hem euerichon,  
 As cronicles remembre of yore agon.  
 The which[e] Iaques in the rew[m] of France  
 Was born of blood to gret enheritaunce.
- The same Iaques, holde a manli kniht  
 In his gynnyng, fressh, lusti of corage,  
 Hadde a brother, be elder title of riht  
 Occupied al hool the heritage,  
 Because Iaques yonger was of age,  
 Which myht[e] nat be no condicioun  
 Nothyng cleyme of that pocioun.
- His elder brother occupied al,  
 Whil this Iaques was but of low degree,  
 Wonder desirous with hym to been\* egal,  
 Always put bak be froward pouerte.  
 And to surmounte, yif it wolde bee,  
 Fond out a mene lik to his desirs,  
 Was chose maister of thes Templeeris.
- Was promotid be free eleccioun  
 Bi them that sholde chesyn hym of riht;  
 Wherbi he hadde gret domynacioun,  
 Richesse, tresour, gret poweer & myht.  
 Of his persone was eek a manli kniht, —  
 The same tyme, put in remembraunce,  
 Phelipp Labele crownid kyng in France.
- Which hadde of Iaques gret indignacioun,  
 To alle the Templeris and al ther cheualrie,  
 Caste weies to ther destruccioun,  
 Gaf auctorite his lust to fortiefe,  
 Doun fro the pope, bookis specefie,  
 Clement the Sexte, concludyng yif he may,  
 Alle the Templeeris destroie hem on a day.

2168 A knight  
 named  
 Jacques de  
 Molay,  
 a Frenchman  
 born to rich  
 inheritance,  
 was of great  
 authority  
 among them,

2176 and as  
 his older  
 brother kept  
 possession of  
 the heritage,

2180

2184 and Jacques  
 had always  
 been held back  
 by poverty, he  
 finally got  
 himself  
 appointed  
 grand master,

2188

where through  
 he obtained  
 great power  
 and wealth.

2192

2196 Philip IV. of  
 France, who  
 hated the  
 Templars,  
 determined to  
 destroy them.

2200

2169. fynde] rekne H.

2170. folk] Folkis B.

2184. with hym to been] to been (be) with hym B, J, P, H 5.

2186. bee] ha be H, R 3, have be R, H 5.

2187. to] om. H.

2195. Labele] la bele R, J, R 3, label H 5, Le Bele H, la Bele P.

2199. to] forto R.

2202. a] oo H.

He had them suddenly imprisoned for certain horrible crimes; and their friends advised them to plead guilty and beg for mercy.

For certeyn crymes horrible to heere,  
 Alle attonis wer set in prisoun, 2204  
 Bi ther freendis touching this mateere  
 Counseilled to axe merci & pardoun,  
 That thei sholde be pleyn confessioun  
 Requere mercy, knelyng on a rowe, 2208  
 And as it was ther trespas been aknowe.

Jacques and three others were detained, while the rest, tied to stakes ready for burning, were led to believe that the king would pardon them if they confessed.

Iaques was take, and with hym othir thre,  
 Kept in holde and [in]to prisoun sent.  
 And the remnaunt for ther iniquite 2212  
 Ordeyned wern be open iugement  
 To myhti stakes to be teied and brent.  
 The kyng in maner lik to doon hem grace,  
 So thei wolde confesse ther trespasce. 2216

They would not confess, but cried piteously that they were innocent until they died.

But al for nouht; thei wer so indurat,  
 Alle of accord[e] and of o corage  
 To axe mercy verray obstynat.  
 The fire reedi, al with o langage, 2220  
 Whan the flawme approched ther visage,  
 Ful pleynli spak [&] cried pitousli,  
 Of ther accus how thei wer nat gilti.

Fro ther purpos list nat to declyne; 2224  
 But with o vois echon[e] an[d] o sown  
 Fulli affermed til thei did[e] fyne,  
 How ther ordre and ther religioun  
 Igroundid was upon perfeccioun, 2228  
 And how ther deth, verraili in deede,  
 Compassid was of malis & hatreede.

Jacques was taken to Lyons and there publicly confessed and was burnt to ashes.

The saide Iaques, of whom I spak toforn, [p. 434]  
 Brouht to a place which callid was Leoun, 2232  
 Tofor too legatis, or that his lyff was lorn,  
 Al openli made his confessioun:  
 He was worthi, for short conclusioun,  
 For to be ded be rihtful iugement. 2236  
 This was his eende; to ashes he was brent.

2207. That thei] Thei that R.

2208. rowe] trowe R.

2222. &] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P — pitousli] spitously R.

2224. to] om. R.

2235. He] And R.

¶ Here Bochas makith a comendacion of thre  
Philisophris for their pacience.<sup>1</sup>

YIUUNG a pris to philisophres thre, Bochas comendith <i>with</i> gret dilligence		Bochas now commendis thre philosophers who were of old time praised for their fortitude and pacience.
How ech of hem was in his contre	2240	
Souereynli be vertuouſ excellence		
Off old comendid for ther pacience,		
Which may be set and crownid in his stall		
As emperesse among vertues all.	2244	
Mong Siciliens first Theodorus,		Theodorus of Sicily, Anaxarchus of Greece and
For pacience hadde in gret reuerence;		
Among Grekis, the stori tellith vs,		
Anaxerses for his magnificence,	2248	
Bi force of vertu groundid <i>on</i> pacience,		
Because he was [both] vertuouſ & wis,		
For suffraunce gat hym a souereyn pris.		
Among[es] Romey[n]s put in remembrance,	2252	Scævola of Rome, who allowed his hand to be consumed by fire.
S[c]euola, bothe philisophre & kniht,		
For his marcial hardi strong constaunce,		
Whan that he heeld amynd the flawmys liht*		
Hand and fynGRES aboue the coles briht,	2256	
Til the ioyntes, fallyng heer & yonder,		
From the wirste departid wer assonder.		
¶ First Theodorus, born in the famous ile,		Theodorus was bound in chains and burning gads were laid on his body, and
Be pacience gret peynes enduryng,	2260	
Cheeff philisophre callid of Cicile,		
<i>With</i> cheynys bounde upon the ground liggynG,		
On his bodi leid gaddis red brennyng,		
Suffryng this peyne, list it nat refuse,	2264	
Bi kyng Iherom, the tiraunt Siracuse.		
For comoun proffit suffrid al [t]his peyne,		he suffered all for the sake of the com- mon weal;
Long tyme afforn[e] liggynG in prisoun;		for he
Which bassent of mo than on or tueyne	2268	

2238. pris] laude H.      2254. For] bi H.  
 2255. liht] briht B, H, R, J — flawmys] flame P.  
 2256. aboue] among P.  
 2258. wirste] wrest R, J, P, wrost R 3, wristis H 5.  
 2264. this] his R, H, J.  
 2265. Siracuse] of Siracuse H, R 3, P.      2266. this] his J.

<sup>1</sup> *The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 178 b: "Bochas here commendith Theodorus with othir ij philosophres for their pacience notably."*

- was one of the conspirators who slew the tyrant Hiero
- Was the most cheef be conspiracioun  
To brynge the tiraunt to his destruccioun;  
For no peyne that he myhte endure,  
The coniuracioun he wold nat discure. 2272
- and chose rather to die in mischief than discover the names of his fellows. He believed that no man should spare to slay a tyrant, and bore his torture in patience until he died.
- Rather he ches in myscheeff for to deie,  
Than the\* name openli declare  
Of hym that slouh the tiraunt, soth to seie.  
Thouhte of riht no man sholde spare, 2276  
For comoun proffit, helthe and weelfare  
To slen a tiraunt, deemyng for the beste,  
Alle a regioun for to sette at reste.  
For which[e] title, he list to suffre deth, 2280  
Al [t]his torment took most pacientli  
Theodorus, til he yald up the breth,  
Gruchched nat with noise nor loude cry;  
Amyd whos herte rootid [so] feithfulli 2284  
Was comoun proffit, *Bochas* writ the same,  
Among Siciliens to getyn hym a name.
- Anaxarchus, to prevent mortal wars, rebuked the tyrant Nicocreon of Cyprus, who
- ¶ Grekis also comende aboff the steris  
Anaxerses and gretli magnefie, 2288  
Cause that he to stynte mortal werris  
List nat spare taquiten his partie  
In rebukyng manli the tyrannye  
Of Nicocreoun, tiraunt ful mortall, 2292  
Regnyng in Cipre in his estat roiall.
- in a rage bade men cut out his tongue. But Anaxarchus said he should have no advantage of it,
- Spared nat nouter for deth nor dreed  
Hym to rebuke bi vertuous langage.  
The tiraunt badde kutte [out] of his hed 2296  
His tunge in haste; but he with strong corage  
Saide he sholde haue non auantage  
Of that membre, which, maugre al his miht,  
Hadde tolde hym trouthe in [the] peeplis siht. 2300
- and biting off his tongue chewed it in small pieces which he spat in the tyrant's face.
- Off his manace sette lital tale,  
Boot of his tunge, of hardi strong corage,  
Chewed it al on pecis smale;  
Of manli herte thouhte it no damage; 2304  
Spit it out into the visage

2274. the] be B, bi J.

2277. be welfare H, R 3. 2279. at] a R.

2281. this] his R, H.

2296. out] om. R, J, P, H 5.

2302. hardi] harde H. 2305. Spet R.

- Of the tiraunt; gat so the victorie,  
 To putte his name euermor in memorie.
- ¶ And S[c]euola, egal to thes tweyne, [p. 435] 2308 Scævola, who  
 For comoun proffit, be iust comparisoun, missed the  
 Put hym in pres[e]; did his besi peyne tyrant  
 To slen Porsenna, enemy to Roome toun. Porsenna  
 For tacomplisshe his entencioun 2312 with his dart,
- Took a strong dart, riht passyngli trenchaunt,  
 With al his myht[e] cast at the tiraunt.
- Of his marke cause he dide faille  
 To slen his enemy aftir his entente, 2316  
 Which in Tuscan with many strong bataille burnt off his  
 [A]geyn[es] Romeyns with his knihtis wente, red coals for  
 This S[c]euola his owne hande brente, love of his  
 Cause that he failed of his art, 2320 city,
- To slen Porsenna be casting of his dart.
- To declare the force of his manheede  
 Vpon hymselff auengid for to bee,  
 As I haue told, in briht[e] coles rede 2324  
 His hand he brente for loue of his cite, deeming  
 Onli taquite his magnanymyte, that he  
 Of feruent loue his cite for tauaille, deserved  
 To slen the tiraunt cause he did[e] faille. 2328 such punish-  
 ment.
- Thus for to putte the marcial suffrance  
 Of thes notable philisophres thre  
 In perpetuel mynde and remembraunce,  
 How thei hem quite ech lik his degre 2332  
 For ther purparti vnto the comounte, All the joy  
 Cause al ther ioie and ther inward deliht of these noble  
 Was for avail of the comoun proffit. philisophers  
 lay in their  
 being of avail  
 to the com-  
 mon weal.
- First Theodorus put hymself in pres 2336  
 For Ciciliens to deien in prisoun; Theodorus,  
 And for Grekis noble Anexerses, who died in  
 His tunge torn, felt gret[e] passioun; prison for the  
 And S[c]euola for Romeyns & ther toun 2340 Sicilians,  
 Suffred his hand, be short auisement, Anaxarchus,  
 Tokne of trouthe, in colis to be brent. who tore his  
 tongue,  
 and Scævola,  
 who burnt off  
 his hand, were
- A martirdam it was, in ther maneer  
 Of ther corage to haue so gret constauce; 2344

2313. strechaunte H. 2315. his] this R.

2318. Ageynes] Geyn R, J, P, H 5.

2319. he brente H, R 3, P. 2343. ther] om. R.

constant until  
death, and are  
now crowned  
with laurel for  
their patience.

Wer so stable of bodi, hert and cheer,  
For comoun proffit, of face & contenance,  
Vnto the deth withoute variaunce;  
Gat the tryumphe be souereyn excellence, 2348  
With laureer crownid for ther pacience.

As Phoebus  
surpasses a  
little star, so  
does patience  
shew its bright  
beams above all  
other virtues.

Lik as Phebus passeth a lital sterre,  
Hiest vpreised in his mydday speere,  
So this vertu, in trouble, pes & werre, 2352  
Cald pacience most fresshli doth appeere  
Among vertues to shewe his bemys cleere;  
For pacience knet with humylite,  
Wher thei abide ther may non erour bee. 2356

It appeases the  
hearts of  
tyrants and

Tirauntis hertis this vertu doth appese,  
Modifieth ther cruel fell woodnesse.  
Rage of leouns, who list lyue in ese,  
Of folk prostrat his malis doth repress. 2360  
Al our ioie began first with meeknesse;  
For of Iuda the hardi strong leoun  
A maidnes meeknesse from heuene brouht down.

vanquishes  
champions.  
It was the  
meekness of a  
maid that  
wrought our  
redemption.

In bataille & myhti strong sheltrouns, 2364  
Avys with suffraunce wynneth the victorie;  
Pacience venquisseth champions;  
Lownesse in vertu be many old historie,  
And meeknesse, perpetuel of memorie, — 2368  
Al to conclude, groundid on resoun, —  
A maidnes meeknesse wrouhte our redempcioun.

#### A Comendacion of pacience in stede of a Lenvoy.<sup>1</sup>

Virtue of  
virtues, O  
noble Patience,  
laud, honour  
and reverence  
be given to thee,

**V**ERTU of vertues, o noble Pacience,  
With laureer crownid for *vertuous constance*,  
Laude, honour, prys and reuerence 2373  
Be youe to the, pryncesse of most plesaunce,  
Most rennommed be anxien remembraunce;  
Of whom the myhti marcial armure 2376  
Geyn al vices lengest may endure.  
Ground and gynnyng to stonden at diffence  
Ageyn Sathanis infernal puissaunce;

2361. with] at H, R, R3. 2364. Batailles H.

2367. be] with H — old] obstynat R 3.

2368. of] in R. 2369. grounde H.

<sup>1</sup> The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 179 recto: "Bochas here commendith humylyte."

- Laureat queen, wher thou art in presence, 2380 the ground upon which we may stand against Satan, which may longest endure against all vices.
- Foreyn outrages haue no gouernaunce;  
Conduit, hedspring of plenteuous habundaunce,  
Cristal welle, celestial of figure,  
Geyn alle vices whiche lengest may endure. 2384
- Cheef founderesse be souereyn excellence [p. 436] Foundress of spiritual up-building, empress of most magnificence
- Of goostli beeldyng and spiritual substaunce,  
Emperesse of most magnificence, 2388  
With heuenli spiritis next of alliaunce,  
With lyff euerlastyng thi tryumphes to auaunce,  
And ioie eternal thi noblesse to assure\*  
In the aureat Throne perpetueli tendure,
- Thre iherarchies ther beyng in presence, 2392 in the heavenly throne where hosannah is sung by angels,
- With whom humylite hath souereyn aqueyntaunce,  
Wher osanna with deuout dilligence  
Is sung of aungelis be long contynuaunce,  
Tofor the Throne keepyng ther obseruaunce 2396  
Syng Sanctus Sanctus, record of scripture,  
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure,
- The brennyng loue of Cherubyn be feruence, 2400 Cherubim and Seraphim and the Nine Orders.
- Parfit in charite, dilligent obeissaunce;  
And Seraphyn with humble obedience,  
And Ordres Nyne be heuenli concordauce,  
Domynaciones with vertuous attendaunce,  
Affor the Trynyte syng fresshli be mesure, 2404  
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure.
- Suffraunce of paynemys hath but an apparence,  
Doon for veynglorie,\* hangyng in ballaunce;  
But Cristis martirs, in verray existence 2408 The constancy of pagans is but appearance done for vainglory; but Christ's martyrs are faithful unto death.
- List ageyn tirauntes make repugnaunce;  
Rather deie than doon God displesaunce,  
Shewed in no merour liknesse nor picture,  
Take full pocessioun for euere with Crist tendure.
- Suffraunce for vertu hath the premynence 2413 Record on Stephen, Vincent, Laurence, blessed Edmund, who suffered victorious pain for our faith,
- Of them that sette in God ther affiaunce;  
Record on Steuene, Vincent and Laurence;  
Blissid Edmond bi long perseueraunce 2416  
Suffred for our feith victorious greuaunce,

2390. thi] bi R — tassure B, R. 2407. veyngloire B.

2408. But] Bi R.

2412. tendure] endure R.

2415. on] off R, of H, R 3, P, H 5.

Kyng, maide and martir, a palme to recure,  
In the heuenli court perpetuelli tendure.

as have many  
other saints,  
And for to sette a maner difference, 2420  
In Bochas book told eueri circumstaunce,  
How for our feith be ful gret violence  
Dyuers seyntis haue suffrid gret penaunce,  
Stable of ther cheer, visage and contenaunce, 2424  
Neuer to varye for non auenture;  
Lik Cristis champions perpetuelli tendure.

who loved  
and feared God  
and lived and  
died in the  
hope of enduring  
forever with  
Patience.  
Whos fundacioun bi notable prouidence,  
Groundid on Crist ther soulis for tauaunce, 2428  
Graue in ther hertis & in ther conscience,  
Voidyng al trouble of worldli perturbauce,  
Chaungis of Fortune with hir double chaunce;  
Loued God & dradde, aboff ech creature, 2432  
In hope with hir perpetuelli tendure.

[How Philip la Bele kyng of Fraunce was slayn with  
a wilde boor and of his thre sones and their  
weddyng.]<sup>1</sup>

Philip the  
Fair then  
came to Bochas  
to complain  
his unhappy  
fate; for he  
WHAN Bochas hadde write of pacience  
And comendid the vertu of suffraunce,  
Phelipp la Bele cam to his presence, 2436  
Fifte of that name crownid kyng of France,  
Gan compleyne his vnhappi chaunce  
And on Fortune, of custum þat kan varie,  
Which was to hym cruel aduersarie. 2440

was slain by a  
wild boar in  
the Forest of  
Compiègne,  
after he  
had been  
vanquished  
and put to  
shame in  
Flanders.  
Woundid he was, [&] with a greuous soor  
Gan his compleynt to Bochas determyne,  
How he was slay[e]n of a wilde boor  
In a forest which callid is Compigne; 2444  
Tolde how he was disclaundrid [&] al his lyne;  
Onis in Flaundris, with many a worþi kniht,  
Venquished of Flemmynges & felli put to fliht.

He had four  
sons and a  
daughter  
Isabell,  
Proceedyng ferther gan touche of his lynage, 2448  
How in his tyme he hadde sonys thre:  
Lowis, Phelipp & Charlis yong of age,  
The fourte Robert; a douhtir also had he

2436. la Bele] le bele H. 2437. 2nd of] in H, R, R 3, H 5.  
2445. &] om. R, R 3, H 5. 2446. worþi] wery H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 179 recto.



- Callid Isabell, riht excellent of beute. 2452  
 Seide Robert, the stori is weel kouth,  
 Which that deide in his tendre youth.
- To this stori who list haue good reward,  
 The circumstance wisli to discerne, 2456  
 His douhtir Isabell was weddid to Edward  
 Carnervan, the book so doth vs lerene.  
 This yonger Phelipp weddid in Nauerne  
 The kynges douhtir, a statli mariage, 2460  
 Callid Iane, whil she was tendre of age.
- The same Phelipp aftir crownyd kyng  
 Of Nauerne, his fadir of assent,  
 Fyue sonis he hadde in his lyuyng; 2464  
 Of which[e] fyue, as in sentement,  
 Thre in noubre be riht pertynent  
 To the mateer, who-so list to look,  
 And the processe of this same book. 2468
- The eldest sone callid was Lowis, [p. 437] Philip le  
 To whom his fadir gaf pociessioun Bel's eldest  
 Of Nauerne, because that he was wis son was  
 For to gouerne that noble regioun. afterwards  
 Phelipp his brothir for his hih renoun Louis X., and  
 Was aftirward be iust enheritaunce the second son,  
 And rihtful title crownid kyng of France. Philip V. the  
 Tall. 2472
- The thridde brothir was be title of riht 2476 The third son,  
 Maad Erl of March, and namyd was Charlis. Charles IV.,  
 Euerich of hem in the peeplis siht was made Earl  
 Wer famous holde & passyng of gret prys. of March, and  
 And for thei wern riht manli and riht wis all three were  
 Phelipp and Charlis took in tendre age famous, manly  
 The erlis douhtren of Burgoyne in mariage. and wise. 2480 Philip and  
 Charles mar-  
 ried daughters  
 of the Earl  
 of Burgundy,
- But as the stori remembreth in certeyne,  
 To ther noblesse Fortune had envie; 2484  
 And bi a maner of malis and disdeyne  
 Brouht in be processe vpon the partie  
 Of ther too wyues froward auoutrie,  
 Causyng the deth of alle thes princis thre, 2488  
 Whan thei most floured in ther felicite.

2456. discerne] concerne H. 2459. This] The H.

2483. the] ther R.

2486. in be] into R.

2488. thes] the R.

Charles of Tarentum, who tried to make peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

¶ Aftir thes thre princis glorious,  
 Tofor Bochas to shewen his entent,  
 A mihti duk, notable and riht famous, 2492  
*Cam* to compleyne, Charlis of Tharente,  
 Which in his tyme to Florence wente  
 To make pes in his roial estat  
 Tween Guerff and Gemelius standing at debat. 2496

was born of the blood of France; but he was slain by an arrow in the wars between Florence and Pisa.

The saide Charlis, born of the blood of France,  
 A manli kniht, the stori doth deuise,  
 Bi whos vnhappy froward fatal chaunce  
 In the werris atween Florence & Pise, 2500  
 On hors[e]bak sitting in\* knihtli wise,  
 Hurt with an arwe, fill lowe down to gronde,  
 Wherbi he kauhte his laste fatal wounde.

A Pisan soldier who trod on his body as it lay on the ground was made knight by the Ghibelline captain.

A man of armys beyng a soudiour 2504  
 With the Pisauns, wer it wrong or riht,  
 Of fals disdeyn that day did his labour  
 To trede on Charlis in the peeplis siht,  
 Whan he lay gruff; wherfor he was maad kniht 2508  
 Be ther capteyn for a maner pride,  
 Which gouerned the Gibelynes side.

While Bochas sat still in his seat with a heavy cheer, Dante of Florence, the laureate poet, appeared to him with impressive countenance.

AND in his studie with ful heuy cheer  
 A Whil Iohn Bochas abood still in his seete, 2512  
 To hym appeered & gan approche neer  
 Daunte of Florence, the laureat poete,  
 With his ditees and rethoriques sueete,  
 Demure of look, fulfilled with pacience, 2516  
 With a visage notable of reuerence.

Bochas arose and met him with great reverence, saying, "O brightest sun, daystar of our city,

Whan Bochas sauh hym, vpon his feet he stood,  
 And to meete hym he took his pas ful riht,  
 With gret reuerence aualed capp and hood, 2520  
 And to hym seide with humble cheer & siht:  
 "O cleer sonne, daysterre and souereyn liht\*  
 Of our cite, which callid is Florence,  
 Laude onto the, honour and reuerence! 2524

Thou hast enlumyned Itaile & Lumbardie  
 With laureat dites in thi flouryng daies,

2496. Guerff] Guelphes P — Gemelius] Gemelyns J, Gamelyns R 3, Gibellines P, Gemelyus H, Genelius R.

2501. in] on B. 2505. wher it wer wrong or riht H, R 3.

2522. daysterre and souereyn liht] O verray sothfast liht B, R, J, H 5.

- Ground and gynner of prudent policie,  
 Mong Florentynes suffredist gret affraies;  
 As gold purid, preeued at al assaies,  
 In trouthe madest meekli thi-silue strong  
 For comoun profit to suffre peyne & wrong.
- O noble poete, touching this mateer,  
 How Florentynes wer to the vnkynde,  
 I wil remembre and write with good cheer  
 Thi pitous exil and put heer in mynde."  
 "Nay," quod Daunte, "but heer stant oon  
 behynde,  
 Duk of Athenis; turne toward hym þi stile,  
 His vnkouth stori breefli to compile.
- And yif thou list to do me this plesaunce,  
 To descryue his knihtli excellence,  
 I wil thou putte his lyff in remembrance,  
 How he oppressid be myhti violence  
 This famous cite [which] callid [is] Florence;  
 Be which[e] stori ful pleyntli thou shalt see,  
 Which wer freendis & foon to that\* cite,  
 And which wer hable for to been excusid,  
 Yif the trouthe be cleerli apparceyued;  
 And which wer worthi for to be refusid,  
 Be whom the cite ful falsli was deceyued,  
 The circumstaunces notabli conceyued,  
 To rekne in ordre upon eueri side,  
 Which sholde be chacid & which shold abide."

2528 thou hast  
illumined Italy  
and Lombardy  
with thy works  
and suffered  
pain and  
wrong for the  
common weal.

2532 "O noble poet,  
I will write  
with good  
cheer thy  
sad exile."  
"Nay," said  
Dante, "turn  
thy pen to the  
Duke of  
Athens,  
who stands  
behind me.

2540 "Do me this  
pleasure and  
describe his  
knightly  
excellence and  
tell how he  
oppressed the  
city of  
Florence,

2544

2548 so that thou  
shalt know  
which were  
friends and  
which were  
foes to the  
town."

2552

[How Duk Gaultere of Florence for his tyrannye  
 Lecherye and couetise ended in mischef.]<sup>1</sup>

- AND whan Bochas knew al thentencioun [p. 438] And when  
 Of seide Daunte, he cast hym anon riht 2538 Bochas took  
 Tobeie\* his maister, as it was resoun; up his pen  
 Took his penne; and as he cast his siht to obey his  
 A lite a-side, he sauh no maner wiht 2556 master he saw  
 Sauf Duk Gaulteer, of al that longe day; no one but  
 For Daunt vnwarli vanshed was a-way. Duke Gaultier;  
 for Dante had  
 vanished.

2533. How] How the R. 2536. but] *om.* H, P.  
 2539. thou] ye H. 2545. that] the B, J, this H.  
 2549. was] wer H — deceyued] *om.* R.  
 2555. To obeie B.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 180 recto.

- This said  
Gaultier was  
of the blood  
of France; and  
his father,  
lord of Athens.
- This saide Gaulteer, breeffi to proceede, 2560  
Lik as it is Iput in remembraunce,  
Touchyng his lyne an[d] his roial kynreede,  
He was discendid of the blood of France.  
Bi long processe and knihtli purueyaunce 2564  
His fadir first, be dilligent labour,  
Of Athenys was lord and *gouernour*.
- was put down  
by the Greeks  
and his head  
smitten off.
- Stood but a while in cleer pocioun,  
Grekiis to hym hadde ful gret envie, 2568  
Caste of assent[e] for to putte hym down  
And depryve hym of his famous duchie;  
To ther entent a leiseer did espie,  
Took hym at myscheef, &, quaking in his dreed, 2572  
Of hih despiht in hast smet of his hed.
- To avenge his  
death Gaultier  
resolved to  
besiege the  
city, but was  
unsuccessful,  
and at that  
time two  
Pisan princes  
began to lay  
siege to Lucca.
- Vpon whos deth auengid for to bee  
The saide Gaulteer with myhti apparaille  
Caste he wolde asege that cite; 2576  
But of his purpos longe he dide faille.  
And in this while, *with* many gret\* bataile,  
Too myhti princis wer come down of Pise,  
Leid a siege to Luk in knihtli wise. 2580
- The Florentines  
came down to  
help the  
Luccans, but  
were defeated;
- Florentynes to Luk wer faourable;  
And to delyuere the siege fro the toun,  
*With* multitude almost innumerable  
Made ordynaunce; & knihtli thei *cam* down, 2584  
Which turned aftir to ther destruccioun:  
For it fill so of mortal auenture,  
On Florentynes fill the disconfiture.
- and at this  
Gaultier went  
to Florence  
from Naples
- The noise and fame of this gret bataile 2588  
Gan sprede ferr bi report of langage  
In Lombardie and thoruh[out] al Itaile  
Mong soudiour[e]s lusti of corage;  
And among othir, feynyng a pilgrimage, 2592  
The saide Gaulteer be vnwar violence  
*Cam* fro Naplis down into Florence.
- and was  
chosen  
governor by a  
parliament of  
magnates,
- The Florentynes heeld first a parlement  
For the sauacioun and garde of her cite, 2596  
Be gret prudence and gret ausement

2570. his] that R, H, R 3, P, H 5.

2578. gret] strong B, J, P.

2579. Pise] Parise H.

2589. report] recorde H.

- Of such as wer[e]n hiest of degre;  
 Bi oon assent thei gaff the souereynte  
 Them to gouerne, hoping to ther encres, 2600  
 With statutis made bothe for werre & pes.
- The gret estatis, reulers of the toun,  
 Callid magnates tho daies in sothnesse,  
 To Gaulteer gaff this domynacioun, 2604  
 Of entent the comouns to oppresse  
 And marchauntes to spoille of ther richesse,  
 Streyne men of crafft be froward violence  
 Ageyn the libertes vsid in Florence. 2608
- The peple alway in a-wait liggyng  
 To be restorid onto ther liberte,  
 Gan gruchche sore, among hemsilf pleynyng  
 For gret extorsiouns doon to ther cite; 2612  
 The grete also, of most auctorite,  
 Hadde leuere to suffre Gaulteer regne,  
 Than ther exacciouns to modifie or restreyne.
- The saide Gaulteer in ful sotil wise, 2616  
 Be a fals maner of symulacioun,—  
 Enmy in herte vnto ther fraunchise;  
 Al that he wrouhte, for short conclusioun,  
 Was doon oonli to ther destruccioun, 2620  
 With a pretence feyned of freendliheed,  
 To his promys ay contrarie was the deed,—
- Clamb up be processe to ful hih estat  
 Be feyned speche and sotil flaterie; 2624  
 In his herte wex pompous & elat,  
 His werking outward no man koude espie;  
 Lite and litil drouh to his partie,  
 That to conclude, shortli for to seie, 2628  
 Al Florence his lustis did obeie.
- Gan sotill plesse the comounte,  
 For to acompliss falsli his desirs,  
 Made promys tencrece ther liberte 2632  
 To such as wer[e]n froward of maneeres;  
 Made an oth to stroie ther officeeres,  
 But thei wolde of ther fre volunte  
 Graunte onto hym larger liberte, 2636

whose  
 intention  
 was to plunder  
 the merchants  
 and rob the  
 town of its  
 liberties.

The peple  
 were dis-  
 contented, but  
 the notables  
 preferred to let  
 Gaultier reign  
 rather than  
 modify their  
 exactions.

Gaultier  
 feigned  
 friendship for  
 both parties,

and climbed up  
 by degrees  
 to such  
 power that  
 all Florence  
 carried out  
 his desires.

He made him-  
 self popular  
 with the  
 commons by  
 promising to  
 increase their  
 franchises,

2599 is repeated H. 2608. the] there J, theyr P.  
 2624 is misplaced at end of stanza H. 2627. litil] lite H, R 3.

and finally became so powerful and tyrannous as to menace the very greatest of the town.

Gretter power and domynacioun  
Tencrece his miht upon eueri side. [p. 439]  
Gan manace the grettest of the toun  
And day be day encreesen in his pride; 2640  
Felli began, felli [he] did abide;  
Wherupon,\* kept cloos in ther entraille,  
The Florentynes gretli gan meruaille.

At this time one Reynier, a high officer in Florence, supported Gaultier in

In this while was ther oon Reyneer,\* 2644  
Of gret auctorite and of gret reuerence,  
A mihti seruauant and a gret officer,  
To whos bidding obeied al Florence,  
Which with Gaulteer acorded in sentence, 2648  
With soudiours hadde stuffid ech hostrye  
For to susteene of Gaulteer the partie.

order to share in his tyranny.

And traitourli for to fortefie  
Thentent of Gaulteer, fel & ambicious, 2652  
To haue thestat onli be tirannye,  
As ther cheeff lord, froward & surquedous,  
To regne in Florence; the cas was pereilous,  
Whan too tirauntis be bothe of oon assent 2656  
With multitude tacomplisshe ther entent.

The magnates could do nothing but acquiesce,

Which thyng considred bi ther *gouernours*  
And magnates callid in the cite,  
Whan that thei fond among hem no socours 2660  
To remedien ther gret aduersite;  
Fill to accord[e] of necessite,  
Gaff ther assent withoute variaunce, 2664  
That Gaulter sholde haue al the *gouernaunce*.

and agreed that Gaultier should swear on the body of Christ to restore them their old franchises.

And condescendid thei wer to this issu,  
That Gaulteer sholde in al his beste wise  
Vpon the bodi be sworn of Crist *Iesu*,  
Them to restore onto ther fraunchise 2668  
Vsid of old, and for no couetise  
From ther promys, for lyff nor deth declyne,  
As be conuencioun [the court] list determyne.

A trumpet was blown and a parliament held. Gaultier made his promise

Heerupon was blownen a trompet 2672  
For tasseble thestatis of the toun;  
A parlement holde, Gaultier first was set;

2642. Therupon B, P.

2644. R omits lines 2644 to 3588—ther was oon J, P—  
Reyneer]Reymeer B. 2648. acorded] accord H.

2671] As the conuencioun list to determyne J.

- And to pronounce the convencion,  
 With euery parcel entitle[d] be resoun, 2676  
 Lik ther accord declaryng anon riht,  
 Stood up a vocat in the peeplis siht.
- With men of armys in steel armid briht  
 Vnto ther paleis cheef and princepall 2680  
 The saide Gaulteer conveied anon riht,  
 Set in a seete most statli and roiall.  
 And the people with vois memoriall  
 Gan crye loude, concluding this sentence: 2684  
 Gaulteer for euere, cheef\* lord of Florence —
- So to perseuere duryng al his lyff.  
 Took in the paleis ful pociouun;  
 Ther durste non ageyn it make striff; 2688  
 Graunted to hym the domynacioun  
 Of alle the castellis aboute enviroun, —  
 Tuscan, Areche and castel Florentyn,  
 With alle lordshipis to Mount Appenyn. 2692
- As ye haue herd[e], Gaulteer thus began.  
 Bi his owne furious dyuynaille,  
 Saide he was born to be lord of Tuscan,  
 With a gret parti also of Itaille; 2696  
 Tolde he was lad, conueied be a quaile,  
 Saide ouermor[e], wer it riht or wronge,  
 That was the sentence of the birdis songe.
- The same brid first brouht hym\* to Florence, 2700  
 Al the weie afforn hym took his fliht;  
 With soote syngyng did hym reuerence,  
 Hih in the hair of corage glad and liht;  
 Wolde neuer parte out of his siht; 2704  
 Gaff hym tokenes to sette his herte affire,  
 That of Florence he shold be lord & sire.
- The same bird he bar in his deuises  
 Ful richeli enbroudid with perre; 2708  
 Took upon hym many gret emprises  
 As cheef lord of Florence the cite;  
 Sat in iugement; gouernid the contre;

and,  
 conveyed by  
 men-at-arms,  
 was set on his  
 throne, while  
 the people  
 cried loudly,  
 "Gaultier for-  
 ever!"

He took  
 possession  
 of the palace  
 and all the  
 neighbouring  
 castles and  
 lordships.

Thus he  
 began; and  
 he said  
 overmore that  
 he was born  
 to be lord of  
 Tuscany, for  
 a quail had  
 told him so

and led him  
 to Florence  
 and done  
 him reverence  
 with its sweet  
 singing.

He bore this  
 same bird  
 richly  
 embroidered  
 in his devices,  
 and taking  
 up the reins  
 of government

2684. this] in J.

2685. cheef] was cheef B, P, R 3.

2686. al] om. H.

2691. Areche] Areth J, Auretium P.

2700. first brouht hym] brouht hym first B, J.

- surrounded himself with people of ill fame. Drouh to hym flaterers & folk þat koude lie, 2712  
Baudis, ribaudis wher he myht hem espie.
- He was so covetous, lecherous and quarrelsome and lacking in all mercy and grace, that it is abominable to tell about him. Of that cite took merueillous truages; 2716  
Crocheth to hym richessis of the toun;  
Of lecherye vsid gret outrages,  
Of maidnes, wyues maad non excepcioun.  
Voide of mercy, grace and remysioun,  
Fond quarelis for to be vengable,  
That to reherse it is abhominable. 2720
- He slew those whom he hated and destroyed franchises and old liberties. Wher he hateth\* merciles he sleth; [p. 440]  
Brak fraunchises and old libertes.  
The peple pleynid, desiryng sore his deth,  
Cried vengauce aboute in ther citees 2724  
For tiranye doon in the contrees,  
Which was cause of gret discencioun  
And of ther cite almost subuersioun.
- The peple desired his death and cried vengeance. They had lacked foresight to see the troubles that would follow. Thus thei wern among hemsilff deuided 2728  
For ther sodeyn greuous oppressioun;\*  
Lak of forsicht, that thei wer nat prouided  
To seen myscheeuys that sholde falle in þe toun.  
This verray soth: wher is dyuysioun, 2732  
Be witnesse and record of scripture,  
May no kyngdam nor cite long endure.
- for which they now complained; and finally they began to conspire his destruction. For which thei gan compleyne oon & all, 2736  
Bothe the grete and al the comounte;  
And of accord among themsilff thei fall  
To refourme the hurt of ther cite.  
And fynalli the[i] condescendid bee  
Bi a maner fell coniuracioun 2740  
To proceede to his destruccioun.
- One day they armed themselves and cried, "Let us slay this tyrant," and laid siege to his palace. Vpon a day, thei armed in steel briht, 2744  
Magnates frst, with comouns of the toun,  
Alle of assent thei roos up anon riht,  
Gan to crie & make an hidous soun:  
"Lat sle this tiraunt! lat vs pulle hym doun!"  
Leide a siege be myhti violence  
Afforn his paleis, wher he was in Florence. 2748

2715. accrochith H, Acrochith R 3, Accrocheth P.

2721. hateth] hated B. 2724. ther] othir H, R 3.

2725. the] theire J, their P.

2729. oppressioun] oppressiouns B — greuous sodeyn J, P.

2736. 1st the] of the J — 2nd the] of the J.



- Swich as wern enclined to Gaulteer,  
 Amyd the paleis, the stori doth vs lerne,  
 Teschewe the seege, *with* ful heuy cheere  
 Ordeyned hemsilf to fleen away ful yerne 2752  
 Out of the strengthe bi a smal posterne,  
 Whan Florentynes dide ther labour  
 To vndermyne round aboute the tour.
- Of which[e] thing whan Gaulteer gan take heed, 2756  
 This message he sente onto the toun,  
 Nat of trouthe, but feynynгли for dreed,  
 Made promys be fals collusioun  
 For to make ful restitucioun 2760  
 Of ther fredamys, as thei list deuise;  
 Sent hem out [oon] Guyllamyn Dassise,  
 Which to the cite was preuid vttir foo;  
 Hadde afforn[e] doon hem gret damage. 2764  
 With Guillamyn to them he sent also  
 His sone and heir to stynte al ther rage, —  
 Wers than his fadir of wil and of corage.  
 Bothe attonis wer hangid anon riht 2768  
 Tofor the paleis in Gaulteres siht.
- Another also, that callid was Herry,  
 Which hadde afforn[e] youe instruccioun  
 Vnto Gaulteer and was eek gret enmy 2772  
 To steren hym ageyn that noble toun,  
 Gynner and ground of ther dyuisioun, —  
 Which tofor Gaulteer, his iugement to shewe,  
*With* sharp[e] suerdis he was al to-hewe. 2776
- Thexecucioun doon upon thes thre  
 In Tuscan born, the rancour did appese\*  
 Of Florentynes, to staunche the[r] cruelte  
 Ageyn Gaulteer, and to his lyff gret ese. 2780  
 He glad tescape out of his disese,  
 Fledde away in ful secre wise,  
 The toun restorid ageyn to *per* franchise.
- Thus he loste be his insolence 2784  
 Al his poweer and domynacioun  
 Bothe of Tuscan and also of Florence;
- His friends  
 were glad to  
 flee by a small  
 postern;
- but Gautier  
 promised  
 to restore the  
 liberties of the  
 town and sent  
 out one  
 William  
 d'Assise,
- an enemy of  
 the city, and  
 his own son,  
 who was even  
 worse than  
 his father.  
 Both were  
 immediately  
 hanged before  
 the palace.
- Another enemy  
 of the town,  
 called Herry,  
 who had  
 incited  
 Gaultier to  
 new outrages,  
 was cut in  
 pieces with  
 swords.
- After these  
 three were  
 executed the  
 anger of the  
 Florentines  
 lessened, and  
 Gaultier  
 managed  
 to escape.
- Thus by his  
 insolence he  
 lost all his  
 power.

2762. oon] *om.* J.

2763. vttir] a gret H, R 3, a great P.

2765. With] off H — he sent to them J. 2767. 2nd of] or H.

2773. steren] restoren H. 2778. appese] espie B, J.

- He went to King John of France, And as myn auctour maketh mencion, Fro Lombardie he is descendid down, 2788  
Drouh to kyng Iohn regnyng tho in France,  
And of berthe ful nih of alliaunce.
- and was at the battle of Poitiers when John was taken prisoner. He fled like a coward As I fynde he was on that partie With kyng Iohn, this Gaulteer, lik a kniht; 2792  
Whan that the kyng with al his cheualrie  
Was take hymself, his lordis put to fliht,  
Into Ingland lad aftir anon riht, —  
The saide Gaulteer, hauyng no reward 2796  
To his disworshep, \* fledde lik a coward.
- and, falling into the hands of some Lombard soldiers, was slain by a certain Florentine. Mette in his fliht with dyuers soudiours Of Lombardie abidyng with kyng Iohn, Which that tyme as brigavntis & pillours 2800  
Took this Gaulteer, ledde hym foorth anon, —  
His force, his corage, his herte was agon:  
Of aenture a certeyn Florentyn  
Smet of his hed; this was his fatal fyn. 2804

[Off Philip Cathenoise born of lowe birthe  
cam to grete estat / & aftir she hir son  
& doughtir were brent.]<sup>1</sup>

Next in order, weeping and trembling, came Philipot Cathenoise.

- B**ESPREYNT with teres, & [with] a woful  
noise, [p. 441]  
Tofor Bochas quakyng in sorwe & dred,  
Next in ordre cam Phelipp Cathenoise,  
Poore of degre, born of lough kynreede, 2808  
Which roos aftir to gret estat in deede.  
Gan with gret sorwe a compleynt ful mortall,  
Ceriousli to telle hir\* woful fall.
- Although she rose to high estate, she was born of low bed, and Bochas was unwilling to spend much time on her story. Touchyng hir berthe, dirk was hir lynage, 2812  
Of poore bed[de] born on outhur side;  
Bochas was loth to spende gret langage  
On hir historie, long theron tabide,  
Purposed hym nothyng for to hide 2816  
Of the substauce, but telle al the grete,  
And superfluite of the remnant lete.

2797. disworshep] worshep B, J — lik] as H.

2807. Philip J, R 3, P.

2811. hir] the B, his J. 2818. remnant] tyraunt H.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 181 recto.

- Which was rehersed to hym in his youthe  
 Whan he was toward Robert of Cicile, 2820  
 Kyng of Iherusalem, the stori is nat kouth;  
 Yit in his book he list it to compile  
 And it reherse be ful souereyn stile,  
 Lik in that court as it was [to] hym told 2824  
 Bi oon Bulgar clad in a slaueyn old.
- The saide Bulgar was a maryneer,  
 With whom also was a Calabrien  
 Callid Constantyn, which ful many a yeer 2828  
 Trauailled hadde & sondry thynges seen  
 In dyuers contres ther he hadde been.  
 Mong other thinges seyn in ther daies olde,  
 This was a stori which[e] Bulgar tolde. 2832
- Duk of Calabre, Robert be his name,  
 Bi his fadir Charlis, the myhti kyng,  
 Hadde in comaundement, his stori seith þe same,  
 Geyn Frederik to make a strong ridyng; 2836  
 Which be force proudli vsurping,  
 Took upon hym to be lord of that ile,  
 Which callid was the kyngdam of Cicile.
- Drepanne in soth[e] callid was the toun 2840  
 Wher Duk Robert his pauylouns pihte,  
 Redi armyd, thoruh his hih renoun  
 Geyn Frederik for that\* lond to fihte 2844  
 And withstonde hym pleyntly yif he myhte.  
 And so befill, the morwe tofor þprime  
 The dukis wiff of childyng bood hir tyme.
- Violaunt men dide that ladi call,  
 In hir tyme a famous gret duchesse; 2848  
 Destitut of other women all,  
 Whan hir child was born in that distresse,  
 To yiue it souke, the stori doth expresse,  
 Saue fro\* myscheeff Philipot was brouht neer, 2852  
 Of Cathenoise, the dukis cheef lauendeer.
- Bi a fisshere, which was hir husbonde,  
 A child she hadde, lyuyng be ther trauaile, whose husband was a fisherman.

2824. to] *om.* H, R 3.

2840. Depranum P.

2843. that] the B, J, P.

2852. Saue] And H — fro] for B, J, H 5, P, R 3 — Philipot] Philip P.

2835. his] the J.

2841. Robert] Roger P.

2845. befor H, before J.

- Thus Philipot  
became nurse  
to the  
Duchess, and  
lived in luxury,  
Which fro the se onto the court be londe 2856  
Day be day caried vitaile.  
And in this caas, because it myhte auaille,  
Philipot was brouht, in this gret streihtnesse,  
To be norice onto the duchesse. 2860
- and accom-  
panied her  
mistress  
to Naples,  
where the  
child died.  
Wher she was cherished aftir hir desirs,  
Ech thyng reedi whan that euer she sente.  
With the duchesse mong other chaumberers  
Into Naples I fynde that she wente, 2864  
Til Antropos, froward of entente,  
Made of this child, ther is no mor to seyne,  
The lyues threed[e] for to breke in tweyne.
- One Raymond  
of Champagne,  
King Charles'  
chief cook, had  
once bought  
an Ethiopian  
child from  
a pirate and  
With kyng Charlis, of whom I spak toforn, 2868  
As myn auctour remembrith in his book,  
Was oon Raymond of Chaumpayne born,  
Which with the kyng was callid maister cook.  
And on a day his iourne he took 2872  
Toward the se; a pirat, as I fynde,  
Sold hym a child which was born in Ynde.
- made him a  
Christian and  
taught him to  
be a master  
cook.  
Lik Ethiopiens was his colour;  
For whom this cook Raymond hath deuysed, 2876  
Be his notable [&] dilligent labour,  
Made hym cristene; & so he was baptised;  
Gaff hym his\* name, & hath also practised  
Hym to promoote, that he vpon hym took 2880  
Bi his doctryne to be maister cook;
- After Raymond  
became a  
knight, the  
Ethiopian was  
made lord of  
the king's  
wardrobe, and  
although he  
was black,  
Philipot, whose  
husband had  
died, married  
him.  
For he soone afftir took the ordre of kniht.  
The Ethiopien wex a good officeer,  
Gat suich grace in the kyngis siht, 2884  
To be aboute hym [was brouht up] mor neer;  
Be processe he was maad wardropeer;  
And though he was blak of his visage,  
To Cathenoise was ioyned in mariage. 2888
- He grew bold  
and asked the  
king to knight  
him, which  
the king did.  
Wex malapert, and of presumpcioun [p. 442]  
To be maad kniht the kyng he gan requeere,  
Which of fredam and gret affecciou  
Is condescendid to graunten his praiere. 2892  
But to declare pleynli the maneere,

2859. Philip P. 2867. in] on H, J, R 3, H 5.

2872. his] this J, P. 2875. Ethiopes H.

2877. &amp;] om. J. 2878. cristened J. 2879. his] the B, J.

2885. was brouht up] om. P, J. 2887. blak] om. H.

- In this tyme Violaunt the duchesse,  
Affor remembred, deide of seeknesse.
- Aftir whos deth, the book doth certefie,  
How Duk Robert of Naples the cite  
Weddid a ladi that callid was Sansie,  
To whom Philipot, as fill to hir degre,  
With dilligence and gret humylite  
To plesen hire did so hir deueer,  
That of hir counsail ther was non so neer.
- Euere redi at hir comaundement,  
Wrouhte atires plesaunt of deliht,  
With holsum watres that wer redolent  
To make hir skyn bi wasshyng soote & whiht,  
Made confecciouns to serue hir appetiht.  
Bi hir husbonde, the stori who list see,  
The same Philipot hadde childre thre.
- She was kunnyng & of hir port prudent;  
Chose be fauour for to be maistresse  
To faire Iane, yong and innocent,  
Which douhtir was to the gret duchesse  
Of Calabre; and ferthermor texpresse,  
Hir husbonde Thethiapien with-al  
Of Charlis houshold was maad senescall.
- “O Lord!” quod Bochas, spak of hih disdeyn,  
“What meueth this Fortune for to make cheere,  
With hir fauour to reise up a foreyn  
Vpon hir wheel, with brihte fethres cleere;  
But of custum it is ay hir maneere  
Fairest tappeere with cheer and contenance,  
Whan she wil brynge a man vnto myschaunce.
- For he that was a boy the laste day,  
An Ethiapien broun and horrible of siht,  
And afor-tyme in the kechyn lay  
Among the pottis with baudi cote aniht,  
Now [he] of neue hath\* take the ordre of kniht,  
With kyng Charlis now is he senescall:  
Swich sodeyn clymyng axeth a sodeyn fall.”
- 2896 At this time  
Violanta died,  
and Duke  
Robert married  
a lady called  
Sancia, with  
whom Philipot  
soon became  
very intimate.
- 2900
- 2904
- 2908 Philipot had  
three children,
- 2912 and as she  
was prudent  
and knowing  
she became  
governess of  
Jane, daughter  
of the Duchess  
of Calabria.  
The Ethiopian  
was made  
seneschal of  
Charles'  
household.
- 2916
- 2920 “O Lord,”  
said Bochas,  
“why should  
Fortune so  
lift up an  
alien, especially  
an ugly,
- 2924 brown  
Ethiopian,  
who once lay  
among the  
pots in the  
kitchen!  
Such sudden  
climbing asks  
a sudden fall.”
- 2928

2894. this] his H. 2896. doth] om. H.

2897. Robert] Roger P.

2901. hir] corrected from his to hir B. 2906. wasshyn H.

2918. for] om. H, R 3. 2923. vnto] in to H.

2928. he] om. J — hath] haue B.

- He and Philipot  
his wife rose  
to great wealth,  
and their sons  
made stately  
marriages and  
became knights.  
But their  
father died at  
the height of  
his prosperity  
and had a  
great funeral.
- Thus Fortune  
can change.  
The eldest  
son also died,  
and the second  
son left his  
besks to take  
his father's  
place.
- Philipot's  
welfare was  
in part eclipsed;  
but as the  
sun shines  
brightest after  
a rain, she  
too rose to  
still greater  
glory.
- Jane, who  
was not  
above criticism,  
married king  
Andreas of  
Hungary,
- and for  
a large  
bribe and by  
great labour  
had Philipot's  
son Robert  
made governor  
of Sicily.
- The Sicilians  
were indignant.
- He and Philipot, his wiff, fro pouerte  
Been enhaunsid and rise to gret richesse; 2932  
Tweyne of ther sonis statli married bee;  
And for fauour mor than worthynesse  
Took ordre of kniht; & in his most hihnesse  
Ther fader deide, whos feeste funerall 2936  
Was solemnised and holde ful roiall.
- Thus can Fortune chaungen as the moone,  
Hir brihte face dirked with a skie:  
His eldest sone deide aftir soone; 2940  
The secounde lefft up his clergie,  
To be maad kniht gan hymself applie,  
Stede of his fader, pleynli as I reede,  
In his offis be fauour to succede. 2944
- Thus be processe fro Philipot anon riht,  
Deth of hir husbonde & [of] hir sonis tweyne,  
Fortune in parti eclipsed hath the liht  
Of hir weelfare & gan at hir disdeyne. 2948  
Yit euene lik, as whan that it doth reyne,  
Phebus aftir sheweth mor cleernesse,  
So she fro trouble roos to mor noblesse.
- I meene as thus, rehersing no vertu 2952  
In hir persone that men koude espie,  
But onli this, be title of this issu:  
Whan Charlis douhtir Iane on that partie  
Was to the kyng weddid of Hungrie, 2956  
Callid Andree, a man of gret corage,  
His saide wiff but riht tendre of age,
- The same Iane, nat al withoute vice,  
As is rehersed sumwhat be myn auctour, 2960  
To whom Philipot whilom was\* norice,  
As ye haue herd, and be ful gret labour  
Of saide Iane, Robert made gouernour,  
Sone of Philipot, for a gret reward, 2964  
Made of Scicile & of that lond stiward.
- This fauour doon to Philipot Cathenoise  
Caused in that lond gret indignacioun,  
Whos douhtres weddyng caused eek gret noise, 2968

2934. than] þan for H. 2937. holde] kept H.  
2945. Phillippe P. 2951. noblesse] gladnesse H.  
2957. Andreas P. 2958. His saide] he seid his J.  
2959. Stanza repeated H. 2961. was whilom B.

- Married to Charlis the gret erl of Marchoun,  
 Which gaff to folk gret occasioun  
 To deeme amys aboute in ech contre,  
 That al that lond was gouerned be tho thre, 2972
- Be queen Iane and Philipot Cathenoise [p. 443]  
 And saide Robert, stiward of Cicile,  
 Sone to Philipot; this was the comoun voice: —  
 The queen and Robert be ther sotil wile 2976  
 Hadde of assent vsed a long[e] while  
 The hatful synne of auout[e]rie,—  
 Roos in Cicile & went up to Hungrie.
- For queen Iane began no maner thing 2980  
 But Cathenoise assentid wer therto;  
 Thexecucioun and fulli the werking  
 Brouht to conclusioun, be Robert al was do.  
 And in this title roos a stryf also, 2984  
 A disclaundrous and a froward discord  
 Atween the queen & hym that was hir lord.
- Hard to proceede upon suspeciuon,  
 Schlaundre is swift, lihtli taketh his fliht; 2988  
 For which men sholde eschewe thocasioun  
 Of fame and noise, & euery maner wiht  
 Bi prouidence remembre in his forsicht,  
 Whan the report is thoruh a lond Ironne, 2992  
 Hard is to stynte it whan it is begonne.
- Withstonde principles, occasiouns to declyne,  
 List vnwarli ther folwe gret damage;  
 To late kometh the salue and medecyne 2996  
 To festrid soris whan thei be incurable.  
 And in caas verray resemblable,  
 Teschewe slaundre list nat for to spare,  
 May nat failen to fallen in the snare. 3000
- Thus for a tyme the slaundre was kept cloos,  
 Al-be-it so it did a while abide,  
 Another mischeef than\* pitousli aroos,  
 Which afftirward spradde abrood ful wide: 3004  
 Auoutrye to moordre is a guide, —  
 Set at a preeff, myn auctour doth recorde,  
 The kyng Andree was stranglid with a corde.

Philipot's daughter then married the earl of Marcon, which increased her power.

It was common gossip that Robert and Queen Jane had long been committing adultery.

The news reached Hungary, and there was strife between the king and queen.

Slander travels swiftly and, once begun, is hard to stop;

so it is better not to give occasion for it: salve comes too late when a sore is festered and incurable.

For a time the scandal was suppressed; but soon another mischief arose: King Andreas was murdered.

2971. deeme] don H.

3003. than] ful B, J, P, H 5, om. R 3.

- Hugh, Earl of  
Avellino, under-  
took to punish  
the crime, and
- Out of his chaumbre reised a gret heihte 3008  
Bi a coniected fals conspiracioun,  
He was entreted, brouht down be a sleihte,  
Afftir stranglid, as maad is mencioniun.  
Whos deth to pun[i]she be commyssioun, 3012  
Huhe Erl of Auelyn be a patent large  
To be iuge took on hym the charge.
- Philipot, her  
son and her  
daughter, were  
found guilty  
and burnt at  
the stake.
- Of this moordre roos up a gret noise,  
Be evidencis ful abhomynable, 3016  
Philipot [I]callid Cathenoise,  
Hir sone, hir douhtir, that thei wer coupable;  
Doom was youe be iuges ful notable;  
And to conclude shortli ther iugement, 3020  
With cheynis bounde to stakis thei wer brent.

## [Lenvoye.]

- This tragedie  
tells the evils  
of presumption:  
no one is more  
cruel than a  
beggar who  
rises to domi-  
nation.
- T**HIS tragedie afforn rehersed heer  
Tellith the damages of *presumpcioun*,  
Bexperience declaryng þe maneer, 3024  
Whan beggers rise to domynacioun,  
Is non so dreedful execucioun  
Of cruelte, yif it be weel souht,  
Than of such oon that *cam* up of nouht. 3028
- Philipot was  
at first a simple  
laundress; but  
when she came  
to estate she  
never considered  
her birth.
- Record on Philipot, that *with* humble cheer  
Bi sodeyn faouur and supportacioun,  
Which was tofor a symple smal lauendeer  
Of no valu nor reputacioun, 3032  
Be Fortunys gery mutacioun,  
Shad out hir malis, testat whan she was brouht,  
List nat considre how she *cam* up of nouht.
- Where is  
there more  
scornful pride  
or seeking of  
evil company or  
intriguing than  
among people  
who rise  
out of nothing?
- Wher mor disdeyn or wher is mor daungeer, 3036  
Or mor froward comunycacioun,  
Mor vengable venym doth appeere,  
Nor mor sleihti fals supplantacioun,  
Nor mor conspired vnwar collusioun, 3040  
Nor vndermynyng doon couertli & wrouht,  
Than of such folk that komen up of nouht?

3008. heihte] liht H.      3015. this] his H.  
3017. Icallid] that called was P, callid H, J.  
3027. souht] I sought J, out sought P.  
3029. on] of H, R 3, H 5 — Philip P.



- Fortunys chaunges & meeuynges circuleer,  
*With* hir most stormy transmutacioun, 3044 Fortune often  
 Now oon set up ful hih in hir chaieer, sets up the  
 Enhauunceth vicious, vertuous she put down; vicious and  
 Record on Philipot, whos venymous tresoun puts down the  
 Compassid afforn[e] in hir secre thouht, 3048 virtuous.  
 The deede brak out, whan she *cam* up of nouht.
- Noble Princis, with *your* briht eien cleer Noble Princes,  
 Aduertiseth in your discrecioun, remember this  
 That no flaterer com in *your* court to neer 3052 tragedy and  
 Be no fraude of fals decepcioun, the treason  
 Alwey remembryng afforn in *your* resoun done by  
 On this tragedie, and on the tresoun wrouht false flatterers  
 Bi fals flaterers that *cam* up of nouht. 3056 who came up  
 of nought!

[How kyng Sausys was slayn by his Cosyn whiche  
 was brothir to the kyng of Arrogan.] <sup>1</sup>

- T**HE tyme kam that of his [gret] trauaile [p. 444] Bochas now  
 Bochas dempte, holdyng for þe beste, thought  
 This noble poete of Florence & Itaile, to rest a while  
 To make his penne a while for to reste, 3060 from his  
 Closed his book &\* shette it in his cheste; labour,  
 But or he mihte spere it with the keie, so he shut up  
 Kam thre princis and meekli *gan* hym preye, his book in a  
 Amongis othre remembrid in his book 3064 chest; but  
 Ther greuauces breeffi to declare. before he could  
 Wherwith Bochas *gan* cast up his look, turn the key,  
 And of compassioun beheeld her pitous fare, 3068  
 Thouhte he wolde for no slouthe spare three kings  
 To ther requestis goodli condescende, came and  
 And of his book so to make an eende. prayed him to  
 Amongis othre remembrid in his book 3072 remember their  
 Ther greuauces breeffi to declare. grievances.  
 Wherwith Bochas *gan* cast up his look, Of compassion  
 And of compassioun beheeld her pitous fare, he could not  
 Thouhte he wolde for no slouthe spare 3068 refuse, and  
 To ther requestis goodli condescende, with their  
 And of his book so to make an eende. stories he  
 Amongis othre remembrid in his book 3072 made an  
 Ther greuauces breeffi to declare. end of the  
 Wherwith Bochas *gan* cast up his look, Fall of Princes.  
 And of compassioun beheeld her pitous fare, The first was  
 Thouhte he wolde for no slouthe spare 3072 Sancho, who  
 To ther requestis goodli condescende, lived in the  
 And of his book so to make an eende. Balearic Isles.

3045. hir] his H, the J. 3047. on] of H, R 3.

3061. &] to B, R 3, H 5.

3074. Sause] Sautius P—hade] made H.

3075. was] om. H, R 3.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

- And, as he writ, a litil ther beside 3076  
Was a smal isle callid Gemaside.
- His kingdom was called Majorca, and there he lived in peace,  
Bothe thes isles togidre knet in oon,  
Wher Sausis hadde his domynacioun,  
Lyuung in pes; enmy hadde he non; 3080  
In long quiete heeld pocessioun.  
Whos kyngdam hool, as maad is mencioniun,  
In that vulgar, myn auctour writ þe same,  
Of Malliogres pleyntli bar þe name. 3084
- Ther is also another smaller isle\*  
Callid Maillorge; & of bothe tweyne  
The seid[e] kyng was lord a gret[e] while,  
Keeping his stat notable and souereyne. 3088
- until his cousin, brother of the king of Aragon, became his enemy.  
Hauyng a cosyn, gan at hym disdeyne,  
Which brother was, as maad is mencioniun,  
Vnto the kyng that tyme of Arragoun.
- It is said that in these isles slings for casting stones in battle were first invented.  
In thes isles, remembrid be writyngis, 3092  
Whan the people went into bataile,  
Was the vsage founde up first of slyngis,  
With cast of stoon ther enmyes to assaile; 3096  
Thei hadde of shot non othir apparaile  
In that tyme; arblast nouthur bowe  
Paraurenture was tho but litil knowe.
- Finally Sancho's cousin came down from Spain with an army and took away his kingdom and  
Alle thes contres wer callid but o lond,  
Wher that Sausis heeld pocessioun, 3100  
Til his cosyn with strong & myhti hond  
[And] with gret power sodenli cam down;  
Brouhte people out of Arragoun,  
Fill on kyng Sausis, feeble in his diffence, 3104  
Gat that kyndam be knihtli violence.
- smote off his head. Though they were nearly related, no courtesy was shewn that day.  
The ballaunce was nat of euene peis  
Atween thes cosyns, who that list take heed;  
For in his conquest this Arogoneis 3108  
Of cruelte bad smyten of the hed  
Of kyng Sausis, quakyng in his dreed.  
Thouh it stood so thei wer nih, of allie,  
Ther was that day shewed no curteisie. 3112

3077. was] with H—Emacide P. 3079. Sautius (*throught-*  
out) P. 3085. isle] Islee B. 3086. Maiora P.  
3098. was tho but] þat tyme was H. 3100. that] om. P.  
3108. this] the J—Aragoneise H, Arageneyns R 3, Arragoneys  
J, Arrogeneyns P.

[How Lowes kyng of Jerusalem & Cecile was put  
doun.] <sup>1</sup>

**A**FFTIR this storie told in woordes fewe,  
And of kyng Sausis slayn be tyrannye,  
*Per cam* a prince, & gan his face shewe,  
Callid Lowis lord of Trynacrye, 3116  
The same isle [w]as in that partie  
Callid Cicane, the stori tellith thus,  
Aftir the name of kyng Siculus.  
Trynacrye, a contre merueillous, 3120  
Took first his name of famous hilles thre:  
The cheeff of hem is callid Pellorus,  
The next Pachynvs,\* the thridde Lillibe,  
Nat fer from Ethna the saide hille[s] be, 3124  
Beside a se ful pereilous and ille,  
With too daungeeris Karibdis and eek Scille.  
This saide Lowys, kyng of Iherusalem  
And of Sicile, the book maketh mencion, 3128  
Which was enchasid & put out of his rewme  
Bi another Lowis and put doun,  
Eendid in pouert, for short conclusioun.  
This laste Lowis of pite did hym grace, 3132  
Til he deide to haue a duellyng place.

Louis, lord of  
Trinacria, or  
Sicania, which  
was named  
after King  
Siculus, a

wonderful  
country with  
three famous  
hills, Pelorus,  
Pachynum,  
and Lily-  
baeum, not  
far from Etna,

was chased out  
of his realm  
and put down  
by another  
Louis, who had  
at least the  
grace to give  
him a dwelling  
place till he  
died.

[How kyng John of fraunce at Peyters was take  
prisonere by Prynce Edward & brouzt in to  
Englond.] <sup>2</sup>

**N**EXT of alle and laste of euerichon,  
Cursyng Fortune with al hir variaunce,  
Makyng his compleynt to Bochas, *cam* Kyng Iohn:  
Tolde his mischeeff, how he was take in France 3137  
Bi Prince Edward, for al his gret puissaunce;  
And aftir that, with strong & myhti hond,  
He was fro Peiteres brouht into Inglond. 3140  
Afforn destroied his castellis & his touns, [p. 445]  
And ouerthrowen manli in bataile,

Last of all  
came King  
John of France,  
cursing Fortune  
and all her  
variance. He  
told Bochas  
how Prince  
Edward took  
him prisoner  
in France  
and sent him

from Poitiers  
to Englond.

3117. was] as P, H 5, om. J. 3118. Sicania P.  
3123. Pachynvs] Pathmvs B, J, Pachmus H, Pachynvs R 3,  
Pachinus P. 3126. eek] om. H.  
3142. ouerthrowen] ovircomen H, ouercomen R 3, ovyrcome H 5.

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

<sup>2</sup> MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

- His princes were slain, and the heaps of dead were searched and spoiled of plate and mail. His princis slayn, ther baneres nor penouns  
Nor brode standardis mihte hem nat auaille; 3144  
The tras out souht, spoiled of plate & maile.  
Maugre his miht kyng Iohn was prisoneer,  
In Ingland aftir abood ful many a yeer,
- John remained in England many a year. Set aftirward onto ful gret raunsoun; 3148  
The worthi slay[e]n on the Frenssh partie.  
The same tyme in Brutis\* Albioun  
Ther floured in soth noblesse of cheualrie,  
Hihe prowess\* and prudent pollicie; 3152  
Mars and Mercurie aboue ech nacioun  
Gouerned that tyme Brutis\* Albioun.
- Mars, their patron in battle, and Minerva gave them influence to excel in prudence and learning. Mars for knihthod, ther patroun in bataille,  
And Mynerua gaff hem influence, 3156  
Meynt with the brihtnesse of shyning plate & maile,  
To floure in clergie and in hih prudence,  
That Prince Edward be marcial violence,  
That day on lyue oon the beste kniht, 3160  
Brouht hom King Iohn, maugre al his miht.
- Bochas favoured John and France, and striving to belittle the famous chivairy of Englishmen, he left spear and shield and fought with pen and ink. Thouh Bochas yaff hym fauour bi langage,  
His herte enclyned onto that partie,  
Which onto hym was but smal auantage: 3164  
Woord is but wynd brouht in be envie.  
For to hyndre the famous cheualrie  
Of Inglissh-men, ful narwe he gan hym thinke,  
Lefft spere and sheeld[e], fauht with penne & inke.
- Although he was a great poet he gave no mortal wound: his partial writing rebounded to his shame — blaming King John because he was taken by Englishmen, whom he disparaged! Thouh seide Bochas floured in poetrie, 3169  
His parcial writyng gaf no mortal wounde;  
Kauht a quarel in his malencolie,  
Which to his shame did aftirward rebounde, 3172  
In conclusioun, lik as it was founde,  
Ageyn King Iohn a quarell gan to make,  
Cause that he wolde of Inglissh-men be take.
- Heeld hem but smal of reputacioun 3176  
In his report, men may his writing see;

3145. tras] cas H. 3148. onto] to J.

3150. Brutis] Brutus B, Brutes J, P. 3151. of] and J.

3152. Hihe prowess] With hih prudence B, J.

3154. Brutus B, J. 3155. ther] the H.

3157. Meynt with the brihtnesse] with þe brihtnesse meynt H  
— the] om. J, P.

3158. To] þe H. 3168. fauht] &amp; faught H 5.

3175. Cause] by cause H, be cause R 3.

- His fantasie nor his oppynioun  
 Stood in that caas of non auctorite:  
 Ther kyng was take; ther knihtis dide flee; 3180  
 Wher was Bochas to helpe at such a neede?  
 Sauff *witb* his penne he made non man to bleede.
- Of rihtwisnesse euery cronicleer  
 Sholde in his writyng make non excepcioun; 3184  
 Indifferentli conueie his mateere;  
 Nat be parcial of non affecciuon,  
 But yiue the thank of marcial guerdoun,  
 His stile in ordre so egali obserued, 3188  
 To euery parti as thei haue disserued.
- Laude of Kyng Iohn was that he abood,  
 In that he quit hym lik a manli kniht;  
 His lordes slay[e]n; *somme* away thei rood; 3192  
 Most of his meyne took hem to the fliht.  
 This iourne take for Kyng Edwardis riht;  
 The feeld I-wonne; hath this in memorie:  
 Treuthis title hath gladli the victorie. 3196
- Of Kyng Iohn what sholde I write more?  
 Brouht to this lond with othir prisonereis,  
 Vpon which the rewme compleyned sore.  
 Bi rehersaile of old cronicleeris, 3200  
 Deied in Ingland; withynne a fewe yeeris  
 Lad hom ageyn; afftir ther writyngis,  
 Lyb at Seyn[t] Denys with othir worthi kingis.

## ¶ Lenvoye.

- OFF Bochas book the laste tragedie 3204  
 Compendiousli put in remembrance,  
 How Prince Edward *witb* his cheualrie  
 Fauht at Peiteres with King Iohn of France;  
 And thoruh his mihti marcial puissaunce 3208  
 Grounded his quarel upon his fadres riht,  
 Took hym prisonere ful lik a manli kniht.
- Bi collusioun King Iohn did occupie,  
 Set out of ordre the roial alliaunce; 3212  
 Sceptre, crowne, *witb* al the regalie

3180. 2nd ther] his H, R 3, hys H 5. 3195. hath] have H, P.  
 3200. Cronyculeres J.

- conveyed down  
to him by  
lineal descent. Was doun descendid to Edward in substaunce,  
Conueied the branchis be lyneal concordauce,  
For which[e] title groundid upon riht, 3216  
Prince Edward fauht ful lik a manli kniht.
- And in token  
that he was  
in the riht  
God gave  
Edward victory. His cleym, his quarel mor to fortiefie,  
In tokne that God his quarel wolde auauce,  
Disconfiture was maad on that partie, 3220  
Vpon King Iohn be violent vttraunce,  
An heuenli signe be influent purueiaunce  
Sent from aboue to shewe Edwardis riht,  
For which the Prince fauht lik a manli kniht. 3224
- Noble Princes,  
weigh this  
matter justly  
in balance;  
there is no  
variance in  
honest judges: Noble Princis, your hertis doth applie [p. 446]  
Iustli to weie this mateer in ballaunce.  
Alle thynges peised, ye may it nat denye,  
Yiff ye considre euery circumstaunce, 3228  
In rihtful iuges may be no variaunce:  
The feeld darreynd, deemeth who hath riht,  
For which Prince Edward fauht lik a manli kniht.
- a thing  
committed to  
God allows of  
no controversy;  
and this is  
the plight in  
which France  
stood: her  
king was finely  
taken at  
Poitiers by  
Prince Edward. A thyng bassent[e] put in iupartie 3232  
And commytted to Goddis ordenaunce,  
Ther may been afftir no contrauersie  
Atween parties, quarelis nor distaunce,  
Who shal reioisshe; and in this caas stood France: 3236  
Fyn\* take at Peiteres, declaryng who hath riht;  
For which Prince Edward fauht lik a manli kniht.

3218. H 5 omits to 3478 (one leaf missing between 180 and 181).

3232. iupartie] memorye H, memory R 3.

3234. Contravesye H.

3237. Fyn] Syn B, Sith P — take] om. P, J.

3238. This line is followed in H by the 14th stanza of the Envoy,  
after which comes the Chapitle of Fortune.

¶ Finis libri Bochasij.

A chapitle of Fortune compild howe she hath hir  
quytt to al wordly pepill.<sup>1</sup>

- L** AT folk of wisdam considre in þer wit,  
Gadre up, a-somme\* & counte in þer resoun, 3240  
To all estatis hou Fortune hath hir quit,  
To popis, prelatis, gynne first in Roome toun,  
To cardynalis most souereyn of renoun, —  
Whan thei sat hiest, koude hem nat diffende 3244  
Ageyn Fortune bi no prouisioun;  
But with a tourn she made hem to descende.
- Afftir in ordre cal to remembrance  
Thestat imperial of famous emperours, 3248  
Which as Appollo thoruh ther mihti puissaunce  
Ther fame up blowe to Iubiteris tours,  
And forget nat thes olde conquerours  
About Mercurye cast hem to assende, 3252  
Til that Fortune with hir froward shours  
Most sodenli made hem to descende.
- Kynges, princis of dyuers regiouns,  
In Asie, Europe, Affrik & Cartage, 3256  
Of Ethiopie the marcial champions,  
Monstres of Ynde, hidous of visage,  
Athlas, Hercules, in ther most furious rage,  
Ageyn whos myht no man koude hym diffende, —  
What folwed aftir? From ther hiest stage 3261  
Fortune vnwarli made hem to descende.
- Preestis, prelatis and weel-fed fat parsonnis,  
Richeli auauuced, and clerkis of degre, — 3264  
Rekne up religious, with al ther brode crownis,  
And patriarkes that haue gret souereynthe, —  
Bisshoppis, abbottis confermed in ther see,  
Seculeer chanouns, with many gret prebende; 3268  
Behold of Fortune the mutabilite,  
How sodenli she made hem to descende.

Let folk consider how Fortune behaves toward all estates: when they sit highest, with a turn of her wheel she makes them descend.

Popes, cardinals, emperors, old conquerors — all were made suddenly to fall.

Kings, princes of many lands and martial champions cast down from their highest stage.

Priests, prelates, and well-fed parsons, monks and patriarchs, bishops, abbots and canons, with many a fat prebend, have also fallen.

3239. considren of wisdam H.

3240. a-somme] a sonne B, a sonne R 3.

3241. Fortune] she H, R 3. 3242. gynne] gan H.

3258. Monstres] Monstrous R 3. 3263. fed] om. R 3.

3264. clerkis] cherlys H. 3265. al] om. H.

<sup>1</sup> "Here Bochas makith a rehersaile how fortune hath made high estates vnwarly to descende." MS. J. leaf 183 verso. *This chapter is collated with H, J, R 3 and H 5 (from line 3478).*

- There are many conditions of men, but Fortune causes them all to rise or descend at her will. Al that is write, is write to our doctrine:  
 Oon courbith lowe, another goth upriht; 3272  
 Summe be vicious, summe in vertu shyne;  
 Phebus now clipsid, somtyme his bemys briht,  
 Sumtyme cloudi, sumtyme a sterry niht;  
 Sum folk appeire, summe doon amende, 3276  
 Shewe off Fortune the poweer & the myht:  
 Oon goth upward, another doth descende.
- Some are virtuous, others perversely wilful, some evil, some stable in Christ; but in spite of the world Fortune rules them all — Sum man hooly encreseth in vertu,  
 A-nother rekles, of froward wilfulnessse; 3280  
 Oon is parfit and stable in Crist Iesu,  
 A-nother braideth upon frowardnesse;  
 Oon encreseth with tresour & richesse, —  
 Who list thryue, to labour must entende, — 3284  
 Mauge the world, Fortunis doubilnesse  
 Doth oon arise, another to discende.
- the industrious and the idle, the wasters and the thrifty. Oon is besi and set al his labour  
 Erli tarise his good to multeplie; 3288  
 Another spendeth, & is a gret wastour;  
 Sum tre is bareyn, sum doth fructefie;  
 Oon kan seyn soth, another can weel lie;  
 Oon kan gadre, another kan dispende, — 3292  
 Vnto Fortune this mateer doth applie:  
 She maketh oon rise, a-nother to dissende.
- Avoid the weed, and take the corn of virtue, as reason teaches; and the lesson of this book is that all men rise or fall on Fortune's wheel. Al thes mateeres rehersed here to forne,\*  
 Of which this book maketh mencion, 3296  
 Voideth the weed, of vertu tak the corn,  
 As resoun techeth in your discrecioun.  
 And for to sette a short conclusioun,  
 In a breff somme this book to comprehende: 3300  
 Fortunis wheel bi reuolucioun  
 Doth oon clymbe up, another to discende.

3271. 1st write] writen H. 3273. vertu] vertues H.  
 3279. man] men H. 3286. arise] to rise R 3.  
 3290. sum] som frute H.  
 3295. rehersed here toforne] conbynd into oon B, J.  
 3297. taketh J, takith H. 3298. techeth] om. R 3.



[¶ A lenvoye compyled vpon the book wryten by the  
translatour specially direct to hym that causyd  
the translacioun & secundely to alle othir it  
shal seen.]<sup>1</sup>

<p><b>R</b>YGHt reuerent Prynce, <i>with</i> support of your grace, By your comaundement as I vndirtook With dredful herte, pale of cheer and face, I haue a-complysshed translacioun of your book; In which labour myn hand ful offte quook, My penne also troublid with ygnoraunce Lyst myn emprise wer nat to your plesaunce.</p>	<p>3304     3308</p>	<p>Right reuerent Prince, I have finished translating your book. My hand often trembled, and my pen was troubled lest my work were not to your pleasure.</p>
<p>Off ryght considred, of trouthe and equite, I nat expert nor stuffyd with language, Seyn howh that Ynglyssh in ryme hath skarsete, How I also was ronne ferre in age, Nat quyk, but rude and dul of my corage, Off no presumpcioun, but atwix hope and drede To obeye your byddyng took on* me to procede.</p>	<p>3312   3316</p>	<p>For I am not skilled in language, and there is a lack of rhyming words in English, and I was far run in age and dull of heart when I began.</p>
<p>Hope with glad chere gaff me greet counfort, Off trust I shulde agreeen your noblesse; But tho cam dred, contraryous of repoort, Gan manace and frowardly expresse, Geyn me alleggyng vnkonyng and dulnesse, — Seyde for his part, by argumentys stronge, I was not able for to vndirfonge</p>	<p>3320</p>	<p>Hope gave me comfort that I shuld please your noblesse, and then came Dread alleging ignorance and dulness against me.</p>
<p>This seid emprise to <i>performe</i> &amp; contvne; The <i>profunde processe</i> was so poetical, Entirmedlyd with chaunges of fortune And straunge materys that were hystoryal, Towchyng estatys that hadde a sodeyn fal; The Frenssh vnkouth compendiously compyled, To which language my tounge was nat affyled.</p>	<p>3324    3328</p>	<p>The matter was inter- mingled of changes of Fortune and strange historical things, and the French difficult; and for French my tongue was not polished.</p>
<p>Dreed and vnkonyng beeyng of assent Made ageyn me a daungerous obstacle, For tacomplysshe your comaundement, Stondyng fer of fro Tullyvs habitacle:</p>	<p>3332</p>	<p>Dread and lack of skill were dangerous obstacles to my fulfilling your commandment,</p>

3303. Prynce] princes R 3. 3316. on] vpon H 1766.

<sup>1</sup> *The Envoy, together with the heading, is supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 260 verso, collated with R 3 and P.*

until Hope  
again began to  
support me.

Myn eyen mystyd, and dirked my spectacle,  
Tyl hope ageyn gan make[n] his repeyr; 3336  
Me to supporte he putte away dyspeyr.

The vines of  
Bacchus were  
sered, and  
Midias' aureate  
liquor and  
Juno's well  
dried up. I  
found no  
favour there.  
My heart was  
heavy, my  
purse light.

Yit of Bacchus seryd wer the vynes,  
Off Mygdas touch the aureat lycour,  
And of Luno wellys crystallynes 3340  
Wer dried vp; ther fond I no favour:  
A thrustlewh accesse cause of my langour,  
Noon egal peys, herte hevy and purs lyght,  
Which causith poetys syhen at mydnyght. 3344

But I trust  
your liberality  
will relieve  
me of this  
quotidian, and  
that a spring  
tide of gracious  
plenty will  
follow.

Trustyng ageynward your liberal largesse,  
Off this cotidien shal\* relevyn me,  
Hope hath brought tydyng to recure myn accesse;  
Afftir this ebbe of froward skarsete 3348  
Shal folwe a spryng flood of gracious plente,  
To wasshe a-way be plentevous influence  
Al ground ebbys of constreyned indigence.

With Hope  
came Humble  
Affection, who  
said, you, my  
lord, would  
have com-  
passion on my  
old age; and

With hope also cam humble affeccoun, 3352  
Made a promys vn-to my dul corage,  
Seyde, ye, my lord, shulde haue compassyoun,  
Off royal pite supporte me in myn age;  
Wherof I caught a maner avautage, 3356  
Thoughte I wolde rather condyscende  
To your desir than your byddyng offende.

I plucked up  
my heart to  
obey your  
command,  
knowing that  
although skill  
were wanting,  
good will might  
prevail; for  
will has more  
might than  
force in battle.

Tobeye\* your precept I plukkyd vp myn herte,  
Caste in my conceyt though konnyng did[e] faylle;  
By good avys I did also adverte, 3361  
How in such caas good wyl myghte moost prevaylle:  
Wyl hath more myght than force hath in bataylle;  
And with that thought inwardly supprysed, 3364  
For to procede I was fully avysed.

And in excuse  
of my rudeness  
I ask mercy  
for my poor  
heart's ease,  
that this book  
may please  
you — to me  
the best  
reward.

But for exskus first of my rudnesse,  
To such as lyst haue of this book dissdeyn,  
That ye, my lord, of merciful goodnesse, 3368  
Whan this translacioun ye haue rad and seyn,  
Though it be spoke in wordys bare and pleyn,  
I axe mercy for my poore hertys ese,  
To me best guerdoun, so that it may yow plese. 3372

3346. cotidian R 3, quotidian P — shal] that H 1766, R 3.

3359. Tobeye] Two obeye H 1766.

3362. prevaylle] avail R 3. 3372. me] be R 3.

- Yiff ought be wryte or seid to your plesaunce,  
 The thank be yove to your royal noblesse;  
 And wher I faylle, atwyteth ygnoraunce,  
 Al the diffautys aret to my rudnesse,  
 With this annexyd, requeryng of humblesse,  
 That alle thoo which shal this making rede,  
 For to correcte wher-as they se nede.
- 3376 If aught  
 be said  
 to your  
 pleasure,  
 let the  
 thanks be  
 given to your  
 royal noblesse,  
 and all the  
 faults laid to  
 my lack of  
 skill.
- So it be doon with supportacioun  
 Off ther goodnesse to be favourable,  
 Nat to pynche of indignacioun,  
 Which wer to me verray importable.  
 And ye, my lord, for to be mercyable,  
 Off your hyh grace my good wyl to considre,  
 An hors with foure feet may stoumble among\*  
 and slydre.
- 3380 Let all  
 correct where  
 they see need,  
 and be favour-  
 able to me of  
 their goodness.  
 Even with  
 four feet a  
 horse  
 sometimes  
 slips and  
 stumbles.
- 3384
- And semblably though I goo nat vp-ryght,  
 But stowpe and halte for lak of elloquence,  
 Though Omerus hold nat the torche lyght  
 To forthre my penne with colours of cadence,  
 Nor moral Senek, moost sad of his sentence,  
 Gaff me no part of his moralytees,  
 Therefore I seye, thus knelyng on my knees:
- 3388 And  
 although I go  
 stooping and  
 halting along,  
 Homer did not  
 hold the torch  
 to further my  
 pen, nor did  
 moral Senek  
 lead me his  
 moralities.
- 3392
- To alle thoo that shal this book be-holde,  
 I them be-seke to haue compassyoun,  
 And ther-with-al I prey hem that they wolde  
 Favoure the metre and do correccyoun;  
 Off gold nor asewr I hadde no foysoun,  
 Nor othir colours this processe tenlvmynne,  
 Sauff whyte and blak; and they but dully shyne.
- 3396 Therefore I say  
 to all who read  
 this book, have  
 compassion,  
 pass lightly  
 over the metre,  
 and correct  
 where you  
 find need. I  
 had no colours,  
 but only white  
 and black, and  
 they shine but  
 dully.
- 3400
- I never was aqueynted with Virgyle,  
 Nor with [the] sugryd dytees of Omer,  
 Nor Dares Frygius with his goldene style,  
 Nor with Ovyde, in poetrye moost entieer,  
 Nor with the souereyn balladys of Chauceer,\*  
 Which among alle that euere wer rad or songe,  
 Excellyd al othir in our Englyssh tounge.
- 3404 I never had  
 acquaintance  
 with Virgil nor  
 Homer nor  
 Dares nor  
 Ovid, nor with  
 the sovereign  
 ballads of  
 Chaucer,  
 who excelled  
 all other poets  
 of our tongue.
- I can nat been a iuge in this mateer,  
 As I conceyve folwyng my fantasye,  
 In moral mateer ful notable was Goweer,
- 3408 I am no judge,  
 but Gower and  
 Strode were  
 notable in their  
 philosophy

3386. among] anoon H 1766, R 3. 3389. hold] heeld R 3.  
 3405. Chauceer H 1766. 3409. my] in R 3.

- and Richard  
Hermit, who  
wrote the  
Prick of  
Conscience;
- yet as the  
summer  
sun surpasses  
all other stars  
and as Lucina  
chases away  
the dark clouds,  
so my master  
Chaucer, who  
also wrote  
tragedies, had  
no peer.
- Petrarch and  
John Bochas  
complained the  
Fall of Princes,  
how they were  
cast down for  
their sins, and  
so did Chaucer  
in the Monk's  
Tale.
- But I, who  
stand low in  
the vale, made  
this book by  
constraint and  
not presumption  
— born in a  
village called  
Lydgate, where  
was once a cas-  
tle beaten down  
in the time  
of the Danes.
- I was  
never yet at  
Cithæron nor  
on Mt. Parnas-  
sus, where the  
nine Muses  
dwell; and  
where I fail  
let Lydgate  
bear the blame.
- The subject  
matter of this  
translation is  
in part sad  
and needs no  
flourishings or  
flowers of  
rhetoric.
- And so was Stroode in his philosophye,  
In parfyt\* lyvyng, which passith poysye, 3412  
Richard Hermyte, contemplatyff of sentence,  
Drowh in Ynglyssh the Prykke of Conscience.
- As the gold-tressyd bryght[e] somyr sonne  
Passith othir sterrys with his beemys clere, 3416  
And as Lvcyna chaseth skyes donne,  
The frosty nyghtes whan Esperus doth appere,  
Ryght\* so my mayster had[de] nevir pere, —  
I mene Chauceer\* — in stooryes that he tolde; 3420  
And he also wrot tragedyes olde.
- The Fal of Prynces gan pitously compleyne,  
As Petrark did, and also Iohn Bochas;  
Laureat Fraunceys, poetys bothe tweyne, 3424  
Toold how prynces for ther greet trespae  
Wer ovirthrowe, rehersyng al the caas,  
As Chauceer\* did[e] in the Monkys Tale.  
But I that stonde lowe down in the vale, 3428
- So greet a book in Ynglyssh to translate,  
Did it be constreynt and no presumpcioun.  
Born in a vyllage which callyd is Lydgate,  
Be old[e] tyme a famous castel toun; 3432  
In Danys tyme it was bete doun,  
Tyme whan Seynt Edmond, martir, mayde and kyng,  
Was slayn at Oxne, be recoord of wrytyng.
- I me excuse, now this book is I-doo, 3436  
How I was nevir yit at Cytheroun,  
Nor on the mounteyn callyd Pernaso,  
Wheer nyne musys haue ther mansyoun.  
But to\* conclude myn entencioun, 3440  
I wyl procede forth with whyte and blak;  
And where I faylle let Lydgate ber the lak.
- Off this translacyoun considred the matere,  
The processe is in party lamentable; 3444  
Wooful clausys of custom they requere,  
No rethoryques nor florysshynge delyctable:  
Lettrys of compleynt requere colour sable,

3412. parflight H 1766. 3419. Ryght H 1766.  
3420, 27. Chauceer H 1766.  
3432. Be] In R 3. 3435. be] om. P.  
3440. to] two H 1766.  
3446. delitable R 3.

- And tragedyes in especial 3448  
 Be rad and songe at feestys funeral.
- This book remembryng of the sodeyn fallys  
 Off famous prynces and surquedous pryncessys,  
 That wer vnwarly cast from ther royal stallys, 3452  
 Which wer in erthe worshepyd as goddessys,  
 Ynde stonys vpon ther goldene tressys, —  
 What was ther ende? Rede Bochas, ye shal se,  
 By fatal spynnyng of Parchas sustryn thre. 3456
- Off this matere ther be bookys nyne,  
 Alle of Fortunys transmutaciouns;  
 This blynde lady, how she made hem declyne  
 From ther moost famous exaltaciouns: 3460  
 Somme ploungyd down to the infernal dongouns,  
 With cruel Pluto depe down in helle,  
 With Proserpyna perpetually to dwelle.
- For\* ther demerytes and lakkyng of vertu, 3464  
 That they lyst nat ther Souereyn Lord to knowe:  
 For whoo is rekkelees to serve our Lord Iesu,  
 Fortvnys wheel shal soone hym ovir-throwe,  
 Though Famys trompet of gold [a]lowde blowe 3468  
 His victoryes, his marcial renouns,  
 Rad and remembryd in dyvers regiouns.
- Whoo knoweth nat God is falle fer in slouthe;  
 Be-war ye Prynces euere of thynges tweyne: 3472  
 In euery quarel that your ground be trouthe;  
 Next in ordre, doth your besy peyne  
 To love Iesu, your Lord moost sovereyne,  
 Truste hym of herte, and he shal nat faylle 3476  
 To be your socour in pees and in bataylle.
- For lak of trust twyes I sey, allas,  
 And make her-oon an exclamacioun:  
 Alle the myschevys remembryd in Bochas, 3480  
 Fro tyme of Crystes in-carnacioun,  
 Haue been for lakkyng of devocioun,  
 That ye Prynces, of wylful negligence,  
 Lyst nat to God do dewe reuerence. 3484

The book remembers the sudden falls of famous princes and proud princesses, who were worshipped as goddesses on earth. What was their end? Read Bochas and you shall see.

There are nine books, and all tell of the transmutations of Fortuna,

and of those who fell for their faults, who did not care to know the Sovereign Lord.

Beware, Princes, that in every quarrel your ground is truth; and do not fail to love and trust Jesus, who will be your succour.

Princes, you are no gods,

3464. For] Two H 1766.

3467. soone hym] hym sone R 3.

3468. alowde R 3. *Space of one stanza left here in R 3 (214d) but no omission of text.*

3478. H 5 begins again with this line, leaf 181.

- but mortal men,  
more likely to  
fall than a  
beggar; and the  
most grievous  
fall is of those  
who sit  
highest.
- Dysdeyneth nat to haue in remembraunce,  
Ye be no goddys, ye be but men mortal;  
Stonde vndir daungeer of Fortunys chaunce,  
More lyk to towmble and more neer to\* fal, 3488  
Than doth a beggere in this lyff mortal:  
Off vertuous poore the fal is nat vnsoffte;  
Moost grevous fal, of them that sitte aloffte.
- Princes, do not  
stand in such  
case: for when  
Death comes  
you know no  
better help  
than the passor,  
no more than  
did rich Cyrus  
or Sardanapalus.
- Ye Prynces quake, stond not in suych[e] caas; 3492  
Yit whan deth comyth, ye can no bet socour  
Than can\* the pore, record of Iohn Bochas;  
Hath mynde heron and make yow a merour  
Off suych as regnyd in glorye and [gret] honour, 3496  
As ryche Cyrus and Sardanapalle,  
How fro the wheel of Fortune they wer falle.
- Set not your  
trust on false  
Fortune: all  
this book  
treats of such  
as did so from  
Adam, who  
was expelled  
from Paradise,
- Set nat your trust, beth war of fals Fortune;  
For al this book tretith of suych matere, 3500  
Gynneth his processe, and so forth doth contvne  
Lamentable and doolful for to here,  
How Adam first, with a ful hevy chere,  
From a place moost souereyn of delys 3504  
Whylom departyd, out of Paradys,
- down to King  
John, who  
reigned in  
France and  
was taken  
prisoner at  
Poitiers
- Cherubyn kepyng\* the gate of Paradys  
With brennyng swerd that ther shulde entre noon.  
This book conveyed by ful greet avys, 3508  
Ceryously from Adam to Kyng Iohn,  
Regnyng in Fraunce; of whom nat yooore agoon  
I sawh remembryd the date of thylk[e] yeerys,  
Whan he was take prysowneer at Peyterys, 3512
- in 1356,  
the last of all  
in this book.
- A thousand toold by computacioun,  
Thre hundryd ovir, fyffty and sex year,  
Trewly reknyd fro the Incarnacioun,  
Whan seid[e] Iohn was take prysowneer, 3516  
Toold and remembryd by the cronycleer.  
As Adam was first that did[e] falle,  
So in this book Kyng Iohn was last of alle.
- We had never  
stood in such  
peril nor dread
- We hadde nevir stondyn in daungeer 3520  
Off worldly stryff nor perellys ful mortal,

3488. to] a H 1766, P, H 5. 3489. mortal] morall R 3.

3490. poore] power P. 3492. suyche] no such P.

3493. can] cam H 1766.

3506. kepyng] abydyng kepyng H 1766, H, R 3, P — gate]  
gatis H, gatys H 5.

- Nor dreed of deth, nat in a thousand yeer,  
 Nor of Fortune that tournyth as a bal,  
 Yiff Adam hadde in Paradys had no\* fal; 3524  
 Touch of an appyl and inobedyence, —  
 Cause that Fortune is had in such reuerence.
- But for to telle and speke in wordys pleyn,  
 How Fortune kaught first an interesse 3528  
 To be callyd, nat trewly but in veyn,  
 Off worldly peple a fals froward goddessse, —  
 This errour gan of bestial rudnesse,  
 Demyng them-sylff they wern assuryd wel, 3532  
 Whan they sat hyh on hire vntrusty wheel.
- Rekne vp alle thoo that\* haue doon hire seruice  
 And folwyd on in ther oppynyoun,  
 Lyk as this book in ordre doth devyse; 3536  
 Peyse in ballaunce: what was ther guerdoun?  
 A sodeyn reys, an vnwar toubmbling down;  
 Yit, for al this, thorough hire flaterye,  
 Al worldly peple doth hire magneffye! 3540

of death nor of  
 Fortune had  
 it not been for  
 Adam's fall in  
 Paradise;

and for  
 that reason  
 Fortune first  
 came to be  
 called a false  
 goddess by  
 worldly people,  
 an error that  
 began of  
 brutish  
 ignorance.

Reckon up all  
 who did her  
 service — what  
 was their  
 reward? A  
 sudden rise,  
 an unexpected  
 tumbling  
 down. Yet  
 all worldly  
 people worship  
 her.

[¶ The laste lenvoye direct vn to my lord.]<sup>1</sup>

- NOBLE Prynce, remembreth al this thynges,  
 Peyseth\* of resoun, lefft vp your eye and se,  
 As your lyne conveyed is fro kynges,  
 How vertu longeth vn-to dignyte.\* 3544  
 [What folwith afftyr? grace & prosperite.]  
 Hath this in mynde and theron doth attende,  
 Mawgre Fortvnys mutabilite,\*  
 Ye shal to-Godward encresyn and ascende. 3548
- Off humble entent, with herte & hand quakyng,  
 Directe this book vn-to your mageste;  
 In which ye may, at good leyseer redyng,  
 Seen dyvers chaunges of worldly vanyte, — 3552  
 Prynces cast down from ther imperyal se,

Noble Prince,  
 remember  
 that virtue  
 belongs to  
 dignity: have  
 this in mind,  
 and in spite  
 of Fortune's  
 mutability  
 you shall  
 prosper and  
 ascend to  
 God.

This book, in  
 which you  
 may see  
 many changes  
 of worldly  
 vanity, is  
 humbly  
 addressed to  
 your majesty.

3524. no] a H 1766. 3534. that] than H 1766.

3542. Peyseth] Peysed H 1766.

3544. vn-to dignyte] afftir grace and prosperite H 1766.

3546. theron] ber of R 3 — attende] attende parde H 1766.

3547. mutabilite] whan she wyl pretende H 1766. After 3547  
 H 1766 inserts: "Whyl ye in vertu regne & dygnite."

<sup>1</sup> The heading and following six stanzas are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 264 verso, collated with R3, H5 and P.

- Let the chastising by Providence of men for vicious living and lack of grace be a mirror to you! Where virtue reigns there is felicity. Although your estate shine like Phœbus, there is no certainty how long you may abide here; age and her cousin infirmity claim their right; death will take no bribe: provide yourself daily to increase in virtue while you are still free.
- As men deserve shall they be punished or rewarded. Beware in time, for tongues are free and your story shall read according to your merit.
- If virtue guide you, then good report shall follow your parting from this world.
- For they wer froward, lyst nat condiscende  
Vertu to sewe and vices [for] to fle,  
So to-Godward tencrenen and ascende. 3556
- Fal of othir thorough vicious lyvynge,  
Somme dysgradyd vn-to ful lowh degre,  
Off providence lat ther chastysynge  
For lak of grace, to yow a merour be. 3560
- Wher vertu regnyth, ther is felycite  
In suych as lyst ther froward lyff tamende;  
Whoo lovith that Lord which hath the souereynte  
Shal ay be grace encresyn and ascende. 3564
- Though your estat lyk Phebus wer shynyng,  
Yit, for al that, ye haue no sewerte,  
How long[e] tyme is here your abydyng;  
Age, with hire cosyn callyd Infirmyte, 3568
- Wyl cleyme hire ryght of verry dewete;  
Deth takith no mede; afforn he wyl not sende.  
Provide your-sylff whyl ye haue liberte,  
Dayly in vertu tencresyn and ascende. 3572
- As men dysserve, be record of wrytyng,  
An expert thyng by old auctoryte,  
Ye shal receyve your mede or your punysshynge,  
By egal peys of trouthe and equite. 3576
- Beth war afforn, folk haue ther tounge fre,  
Lyk your dyscert shal rede your legende;  
This verray soth, voyde of duplycite,  
Yevith hem cause to preye ye may ascende. 3580
- Off hyh prudence aforon ymagynyng,  
Yiff vertu guye your magnanymyte,  
Than good[e] repooert afftir your partyng  
Shal floure and shyne in euery comounte. 3584
- Almesse partyd to folk in poverté,  
And compassyoun the praylle to amende,  
Is beest[e] mene toward the hevenly se  
By vertuouus lyff tencresyn and ascende. 3588

3558. dysgrated H 5. 3563. that] ye P.

3571. your-sylff] your lyfe P.

3575. 1st your] to your R 3, P — 2nd your] om. H 5.

3578. shal] to R 3. 3579. soth] trouthe H 5.



¶ Woordis of the translatur vn to his book atte ende.<sup>1</sup>

WITH lettre* & leuys go litil book trembling,	[p. 447]	Go, little book, pray to the prince for pity.
Pray to þe Prince to haue on the pite,		Thou hast no bright colours,
Voide of picture & enlumyny[n]g,		no curious songs of
Which hast of Cithero no corious dite,	3592	Cithæron, no flowers of
Nor of his gardyn no flour[e]s of beute;		beauty: God
God graunt[e] grace thi reudnesse nat offende		grant that
The hih noblesse, the magnanymyte		thy rudeness
Of his presence, whan thou shalt up ascende.	3596	offend not his presence.
And, for my part, of oon hert abidyng,		And I, kneeling
Void of chaung and mutabilite,		on my knee,
I do presente this book with hand shaking,		with shaking
Of hool affeccioun knelyng on my kne,	3600	hand do present this
Praying the Lord, the Lord oon, too & thre,		book of whole
Whos magnificence no clerk can comprehende,		affection,
To sende you miht, grace and prosperite		praying the
Euer in vertu tencresen & ascende.	3604	Lord to send you might, grace, and prosperity.

## Finis libri Amen.

¶ Go kis the steppis of them that wer forthring,		Go kiss the
Laureat poetes, which hadde souereynte		steps of those
Of elloquence to supporte thy making,		laureate poetes
And pray all tho that shal this processe see,	3608	who sup- ported thy
In thyn excus[e], that thei list to bee		making, and
Fauourable to lakke or to comende;		be humble
Set thi ground upon humylite,		that thou
Vnto ther grace that thou maist up ascende.	3612	mayst ascend unto the grace of men.
In a short clause thi content rehersing,		Since one man
As oon up clymbeth to gret prosperite,		climbs up to
So another, bi expert knowleching,		prosperity and
Fro gret richesse is brouht to pouerte.	3616	another falls from wealth
Alas, O book, what shal I seyn of the?		to poverty,
Thi tragedies thoruh al the world to sende,		alas, O book, what shall I say of thee?

3589. lettre] lettres B, letter P, lettir H, lettir H 5.

3596. his] their H. 3599. shaking] quakyng H.

3601. 2nd Lord] om. P. 3602. can] may P.

<sup>1</sup> "The wordys of the translatur." MS. J. leaf 183d.

Go fourth, I pray; excuse thi-silf & me;  
 Who loueth most vertu hiest shal ascende. 3620

Thou art clad  
 in the black  
 of complaint  
 and mourning,  
 thou art  
 called the  
 Fall of  
 Princes, inter-  
 mingled with  
 adversity and  
 joy; and  
 those who will  
 prosper must  
 ascend  
 by virtue.

Blak be thi weede of compleynt & moornyng,  
 Callid Fall of Princis from ther felicite,  
 Lik chaunteplure, now singyng now weeping,  
 Wo afftir merthe, next ioie aduersite, 3624  
 So entermedlid ther is no seurete,  
 Lik as this book doth preise and reprehende, —  
 Now on the wheel, now set in louh degre;  
 Who wil encrece bi vertu must ascende. 3628

Finis totius libri.

[Explicit John Bochas.]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MS. J. leaf 184 recto.

[Greneacres A Lenvoye vpon John Bochas.]<sup>1</sup>

Blake be thy bondes and thy wede alsoo,  
 Thou sorowfull book of matier dispeired,  
 In tokne of thyn inward mortal woo,  
 Which is so badde it may not be enpeired. 4  
 Thou owest nat outward to be feired,  
 That inward hast so many a ruffull clause;  
 Such be thyn habite of colour as thi cause.

No cloth of tyssewe ne veluet crymesyne, 8  
 But lik thi monke, moornyng vnder his hood,  
 Go weile and wepe with wofull Proserpyne,  
 And lat thi teeres multeplie the flood  
 Of blak Lythey vnder the bareyn wood, 12  
 Where-as goddesse hath hir hermytage, —  
 Helpe hir to wepe, and she wyll geve the wage.

Noblesse of Ioye sith thou maist nat approche,  
 This blak goddesse I counsell the tobeie. 16  
 Compleyne with hir vnder the craggy roche,  
 With wepyng soules vpon the said Lythey,  
 Sith thou of sorowe art instrument and keye, —  
 So harpe and synge there, as thou may be herde; 20  
 For every Ioie is of thi name afferd.

Prynnesse of woo and wepyng, Proserpyne,  
 Whiche herborowest sorow euen at thyn hert[e] roote,  
 Admytte this Bochas for a man of thyne; 24  
 And though his habite blakker be than soote,  
 Yitt was it maked of thi monkes boote,  
 That him translated in Englissh of Latyne:  
 Therefore now take him for a man of thyne. 28

1. bondes] hondes P, P 1.

4. impeyred P.

5. feared P.

6. Ruffull J.

8. cremesyne P 1, P.

20. mayst P.

21. euery] euer P, P 1.

26. boote] hode P, P 1.

<sup>1</sup> *The Envoy by Greneacres is supplied from MS. J. leaf 184 recto, collated with P 1 and P.*



## APPENDIX.

### ¶ The Daunce of Machabree<sup>1</sup>

wherin is liuely expressed and shewed the state of  
manne, and howe he is called at vncertaine tymes by  
death, and when he thinketh least thereon: made  
by thaforsayde Dan John Lydgate  
Monke of Burye.

### ¶ The Prologe

<b>O</b> YE folkes hard hearted as a stone, Whiche to this worlde geue* al your aduertence, Lyke as it should euer lasten in one, —	
Where is your wit, where is your prouidence To seen aforne the sodayn violence	4
Of cruel death, that be so wyse and sage, Which slayeth, alas, by stroke or pestilence Both yong & olde of lowe and high parage?	8
Death spareth nought low ne high degre, Popes, kynges, ne worthye Emperours; Whan they shine most in felicite, He can abate the freshnes of her flours,	12
Her bright[e] sunne clipsen with his shours, Make them plunge fro her sees lowe; — Mauger the might of al these conquerours, Fortune hath them from her whele ythrow.	16

1. folkes] folkes that bene, Harley 116 = H.
2. this world geue] the worlde haue, Tottel = T.
3. laste euer H. 6. be] dethe *corrected to* slethe H.
- 7.] om. H. 8. high and loue H. 9. hight ne law H.
10. in thaire felicite H. 15. Maugre H.

<sup>1</sup>The text, here printed because of its interest in connexion with the "Fall of Princes," is based on Tottel's edition (fol. ccxx to end of fol. ccxxiii), collated with MS. Harley 116 and in part with MS. Lansdowne 669. The punctuation and use of capital letters have been modernized, and *th* substituted for *y* (b). A superior text will be included by Miss Hammond in her forthcoming "Fifteenth Century Anthology." The two anonymous woodcuts (size of originals 160 x 110 and 158 x 110) are reproduced from Tottel. They are in both drawing and composition very superior to the average English woodcut of the period and of considerable interest as the work of an unknown designer of great talent.

Considereth this, ye folkes that been wyse,  
 And it emprinteth in your memoriall,  
 Like thensample which that at Parise  
 I fonde depict ones vppon\* a wal 20  
 Full notably, as I rehearse shall.  
 Of a Frenche clarke takyng acquaintaunce,  
 I toke on me to translaten all  
 Out of the Frenche Machabrees daunce. 24

By whose aduise and counsayle at the lest,  
 Through her stiering and her mocion,  
 I obeyed vnto her request,  
 Therof to make a playn translacion 28  
 In English tonge, of entencion  
 That proud[e] folkes that bene stout and bolde,  
 As in a mirroure toforne in her reason  
 Her vgly fine there clearly may beholde. 32

By [this] ensample, that thei in her ententes  
 Amend her life in euery maner age.  
 The which[e] daunce at Sainct Innocentes  
 Portrayed is, with all the surplusage, 36  
 Youen vnto vs our liues to correct  
 And to declare the fine of our passage, —  
 Right anone my stile I wil direct  
 To shewe this worlde is but a pilgrimage. 40

¶ The ende of the Prologe.

¶ The Wordes of the Translatour.

**O** CREATURES ye that bene reasonable,  
 The life desiring which is eternall,  
 Ye may see here doctrine ful notable  
 Your life to lead[e], which that is mortall, 44  
 Thereby to learne in especiall,  
 How ye shal trace the daunce of Machabree,  
 To man and woman ylike naturall;  
 For death ne spareth high ne lowe degree. 48

In this myroure euery wight may fynde,  
 That him behoueth to gone vpon this daunce.  
 Who goeth toforne or who shall go behynde,  
 All dependeth in Goddes ordinaunce. 52  
 Wherefore eche man lowly take\* his chaunce;  
 Death spareth nouthere poore ne\* bloud royall:  
 Eche\* man therefore haue this in remembraunce,  
 Of oo matter God hath yforged all. 56

¶ The Daunce of Machabree.

20. vppon] in T. 30. that] whiche H.  
 32. may clerly ther H. *Line 40 is misplaced after line 36 H.*  
 41. ye] om. Lansdowne 699 = L. 42. which] bat H.  
 46. of Machabree] which that ye see L. 47. ylike] that be L.  
 49. wight] man L. 51. toforne] before L — shall go] goth L.  
 53. eche man lowly take] lowly euery man T.  
 54. nouthere poore ne] not poore ne yet T. 55. Eche] euery T.

## Cunctis mortalibus mors debetur.



¶ Death fyrst speaketh vnto the Pope, and after to euery degree as foloweth.

**Y**E that been set most high in\* dignitie  
 Of al estates in earth spirituall,  
 And like to\* Peter hath the soueraintee  
 Ouer the church and states temporall, 60  
 Vpon this daunce ye first begin[ne] shall,  
 As most worthy lord and gouernour;  
 For al the worship of your estate papall,  
 And of [al] lordship to God is the honour. 64

## The Pope maketh aunswere.

**F**YRST me behoueth this daunce for to lede,  
 Which sat in earth[e] highest in my see,  
 The state ful perillous, whoso taketh hede,  
 To occupie Seynt Petris\* dignitee; 68  
 But for al that [fro] Death I may not flee,  
 Vpon\* this daunce with other for to trace;  
 For which al honor, who prudently can see,  
 Is litle worth that doth so soone passe. 72

57. most] *om.* L — high in] in high T.

59. to] as T, H — hath] have L, hadde H.

60. chirche most in especiall L. 61. ye] *om.* H.

64. of] *om.* H. 65. for] with deth L. 67. ful] *om.* L.

68. Seynt Petris] Peters T, H. 69. fro] *om.* H.

70. Vpon] On T, H — this] his H. 71. which al] sich L.

**Death speaketh to the Emperour.**

**S**YR Emperour, lord of al the grounde,  
 Ye [Most] souereine prince, surmountyng\* of noblesse,  
 Ye mot forsake of gold your apple round,  
 Scepter and swerde, & al your high prowesse; 76  
 Behind you leue\* your treasure and\* riches,  
 And with other to my daunce obey:  
 Against my might is worth none hardines,  
 Adams children al they must[e] deye. 80

**The Emperour maketh aunswer.**

**I** NOTE to whom that I may [me] appeale  
 Touching death, which doth me so constrain;  
 There is no gin to helpen my querel,  
 But spade and pickoys my graue to atteyne, — 84  
 A simple shete, there is nomore to seyn,  
 To wrappen in my body and visage:  
 And therupon I may me sore\* compleyne,  
 That lordes great haue litle auantage. 88

**Death speaketh to the Cardinal.**

**Y**E been abashed, it semeth, and in drede,  
 Syr Cardinal, it sheweth by your chere;  
 But yet for-thy ye folowe shall in dede,  
 With other folke my daunce for to lere. 92  
 Your great aray, al shal [ye] leauen here, —  
 Your hat of red, your vesture of great coste;  
 All these thynges reckoned well in fere,\*  
 In great[e] honour good auyse is loste. 96

**The Cardinall maketh aunswere.**

**I** HAUE great cause, certes this is no faile  
 To be abashed and greatly dread[e] me,  
 Sith Death is come me sodainly tassaile,\*  
 That I shall neuer hereafter clothed be 100  
 In grise nor ermine like vnto my degree,  
 Mine hat of red leuen eke in distresse, —  
 By which I haue conceyued\* wel and see  
 That worldly\* ioye endeth in heauines. 104

**Death speaketh to the Kyng.**

**O** NOBLE Kyng, most worthy of renoun,  
 Come foorth anone, for al your worthines  
 That whylom had about you enuiron  
 Great royaltie and passing hye noblesse. 108

74. Most] *om.* H — surmountyng] & highest T, H.  
 75. mot] muste L, moste H.  
 77. you leue] leten T, L — and] and your T, L.  
 79. is worth] worthe is H. 81. me] *om.* L. 83. gin] bote H.  
 87. And therupon I may me sore] wherupon sore I me T, L.  
 88. litle auantage] so lytell vayntage H.  
 93. ye] *om.* L — leue H. 95. fere] feare T, L.  
 99. tassaile] to assaile T. 100 and 101 are transposed in H.  
 103. conceyued] learned T, L.  
 104. That] How that T, L — worldly] al T, L.



But right anon [for] al your great highnes,  
Sole from your men in hast ye shall it lete,  
Who most aboundeth here in great riches,  
Shall beare with hym but a [single] shete. 112

The Kyng maketh aunswere.

I HAUE nought learned here-toforn to daunce  
No daunce in sooth of footyng so sauage,  
Where-through I se by clere demonstraunce,  
What pride is worth or force of high linage! 116  
Death all fordo[e]th, this is his vsage,  
Great and smal that in this world soiourne:  
Who is most meke, I hold[e] hym most sage;  
For we shall all to dede\* ashes tourne. 120

Death speaketh to the Patriarche.

SYR Patriarche, al your humble chere  
Ne quiteth you nought nor your humilitie;  
Your double crosse of gold and stones clere,  
Your power whole and al your dignitie 124  
Some other shall of very equitie  
Possede anon, as I rehearse can:  
Trusteth neuer that ye shall Pope be;  
For foly\* hope deceiueh many a man! 128

The Patriarche maketh aunswere.

WORLDLY honour, gret treasour & riches  
Haue me deceiued soothfastly in dede;  
Mine old[e] ioyes been turned to\* tristesse!  
What auayleth such treasours to possede? 132  
Hie clymbyng\* vp a fall hath for his mede.  
Great estates folke wasten out of number;  
Who mounteth high, it is sure and no drede,  
Great[e] burden doth hym oft encomber. 136

Death speaketh to the Cunstable.

IT is my ryght to arest you and constreyne  
With vs to daunce, my mayster Sir Cunstable!  
For more stronger than euer was Charlemain,  
Death hath afforced, and more worshipable; 140  
For hardines ne knighthode, this no\* fable,  
Nor strong armure of plates ne\* of maile, —  
What gayneth armes of folkes most notable,  
Whan cruell death list hem\* to assayle? 144

The Cunstable maketh aunswere.

MY purpose was and whole entencion  
To assail castel[le]s & mighty fortresses,  
And bryng[e] folke vnto subieccion,  
To seke honour, fame, and great riches; 148

109. for] *om.* L. 112. single] *om.* L.  
119. I holde hym] holde he is H. 120. dede] the dead T, L.  
121. al] *with* all H. 128. foly] holy T, L. 131. to] into T, L.  
133. Hie clymbyng] It climbeth T, L.  
140. afforced] enforced H.  
141. this] *om.* H — no] is no T, L, H. 142. ne] nother T, L.  
144. hem] him T. 146. fortresse H. 148. riches H.

But I see that al worldly prowesse  
 Death can abate, which is a great despite;  
 To him alone, sorow and eke swetenes:  
 For agaynst death is found[e] no respite. 152

**Death speaketh to the Archebishop.**

**S**YR Archebishop, why do ye you withdrawe  
 So frowardly, as it wer by disdayne?  
 Ye must approche [vn] to my mortall lawe;  
 It to contrary it wer but\* in vayne: 156  
 For day by day there is none other gayne,  
 Death at the hand pursueth euery coast;  
 Prest and debte mot bee yelde againe,  
 And at a daye men counten with her host. 160

**The Archebishop maketh aunswere.**

**A**LAS, I wote not what\* partie for to flee,  
 For drede of death I haue so gret distres!  
 Tescape\* his might I can no refute see;  
 That who-so knew his constreint and duresse, 164  
 He would[e] take reason to maistresse.  
 Aduē my treasure, my pompe & pride also,  
 My painted chambers, my port & my freshnes, —  
 Thyng that behoueth nedes mot be do. 168

**Death speaketh to the Barone.**

**Y**E that among[es] Lordes and Barons  
 Haue had so long[e] worship and renoun,  
 Foryet your trumpetes and your clarions;  
 This is no dreame nor simulacion. 172  
 Whylom your custom and entencion  
 Was with ladies to daunsen in the shade;  
 But oft it happeth, in conclusion,  
 One man breaketh that another made. 176

**The Baron maketh aunswere.**

**F**ULL oft[e] sith I haue been auctorised  
 To high *emprises* & thinges of gret fame.  
 Of high & low my thanke also deuised,  
 Cherished *with* ladies & women high of name; 180  
 Ne neuer on me was put no defame,  
 In lordes courte,\* which that was notable;  
 But deathes stroke hath made me [so] lame:  
 Under heauen in earth is nothyng stable. 184

**Death speaketh to the Princesse.**

**C**OME forth anon, my Lady good Princesse,  
 Ye must also gon vpon this daunce.  
 Nought may auayle your great *straungenesse*,  
 Nether your beauty nor your gret *pleasauce*, 188

153. you] so H. 155. vnto] to L.  
 156. but] nought but T, L. 158. the] *om.* H.  
 159. debte] death L. 160. a] oo H. 161. what] to what T, L.  
 163. Tescape] To escape T. 166. &] my H.  
 182. courte] of court T, L. 183. so] *om.* L.

Your riche aray, nother your daliaunce,  
That whylom couth so many holde in hond  
In loue, for al your double variaunce.  
Ye mot as nowe this footyng vnderstonde. 192

The Princesse maketh aunswere.

**A**LAS, I see there is none other boote,  
Deth hath in earth no lady nor maistres,  
And\* on this daunce yet mot I nedes fote:  
For there nis quene, countesse ne dutchesse, 196  
Flouring in bountie nor in her fayrenes,  
That shode of Death mot passe the passage,  
When our beautie and counterfeit fairnes  
Dieth, adue then our rimpled age! 200

Death speaketh to the Bishop.

**M**Y Lord Sir Bishop, with miter & crosse,  
For al your riches, soothlye I ensure,  
For all your treasour [so longe] kept in closse,  
Your worldly goodes and goodes of nature, 204  
[And] of your shepe the ghostly dredeful\* cure,  
With charge committed to your prelacie,  
For to accoumpt ye shal be brought to lure, —  
No wight is sure that climbeth ouer hye. 208

The Bishop maketh aunswere.

**M**INE heart truely is nother glad ne mery,  
Of sodein tidinges which that ye [me] v.ing;  
My feast is turned vnto a simple ferye,\*  
That for discomfort me list nothyng [to] syng. 212  
The world contrarie now to my\* werking,  
Which al estates\* can so disherite;  
He al with-halt, alas, at our partyng,  
And al\* shall passe saue onely our merite. 216

Death speaketh to the Squyer.

**C**OMMETH forth Syr Squyer, right fresh of your araye,  
That conne of daunces al the new[e] guise,  
Thoghe ye bare armes, fresshe horsed yesterday,\*  
With spere & shielde at your vncouth deuisse, 220

195. And] & T — this] his H. 197. bountie] beaute H.  
198.] That she of right most nedys the trace sew H — shode]  
shooe T. 199. When] For to H.  
200.] Our Reueled age saith farwell adiev H.  
201. with] your H. 203. For] om. H — so longe] om. L.  
205. And] om. L — ghostly dredeful] dredeful ghostly T, L.  
210. me] om. L.  
211. vnto a simple ferye] into simple terie T, L.  
212. to] om. L.  
213. contrarie now to my] contrarieth to me now in T —  
world] word L — now] om. L — my] me in L.  
214. Which al estatis] That al folkes T, H.  
215.] And needis we must on to our departyng L.  
216. And al] Al thyng T, H.  
217. This stanza is omitted in L — Commeth] Come H — of]  
in H. 218. davnce H.  
219.] If ye bare harnes freshly horsed yesterday T.

And toke on you so many high emprise,  
Dauneth with vs; it wyl no better be;  
There is no succour in no maner wyse:  
For no man may fro Deathes stroke flee. 224

**The Squyer maketh aunswere.**

**S**ITHENS that Death me holdeth in his lase,  
Yet shal I speake oo worde or that\* I passe:  
Aduē al myrth, aduē now al solace,  
Aduē my ladies whilom so freshe of face, 228  
Aduē beautie, pleasaunce, and al solace!  
Of Deathes chaunge euery day is prime,  
Thinke on your soules or\* that Death manace;  
For all shal rot, and no man wot what time. 232

**Death speaketh to the Abbot.**

**C**OMMETH forth Syr Abbot, with your brode hatte,  
Beeth nought abashed thogh\* ye hauen ryght;  
Great is your head, your belly rounde\* and fat,  
Ye mot come daunce, thogh\* ye be nothyng light. 236  
Leaueth your abbey to some other wight,  
Your heyre is of age your state to occupie;  
Who that is fattest, I haue hym behyght,  
[Shall] in his graue\* soonest putrifie. 240

**The Abbot maketh aunswere.**

**O**F thy manace I hauen o gret\* enuy,  
That I shall now leaue al\* gouernaunce,  
But that I shal as a cloysterer dye;  
This Death is to me passing great greuaunce. 244  
My libertie nor my great habundaunce,  
What may they vayne\* in any maner wyse?  
Yet aske I mercy with deuoute\* repentaunce,  
Thogh\* in dying to late men them auise. 248

**Death speaketh to the Abbesse.**

**A**ND ye my lady, gentle dame Abbesse,  
With your mantel[le]s furred large and wyde,  
Your veile, your wimple, your ryng\* of gret riches,  
And bedes, sister, ye mot now leyn a-syde;\* 252  
For to this daunce I must be\* your guide,  
Thogh\* ye be tender borne of gentle bloode,  
While that ye\* liue for your selfe prouide;  
For after death[e] no man hath no good. 256

222. no] not H.

225. lace H. 226. or that] ere T, L. 231. or] ere T, L.

233. Come H. 234. abashed thogh] abasht if T, L.

235. rounde] large T, H. 236. if] thogh H.

239. fattest] most fatte H. 240. Shall in his graue] In his  
graue shall T, L. 241. thy] these T.

241. thy manace I haue no gret] these threts haue I none T —  
thi tretyse L — no gret] noon L.

242. al] al the T, L. 246. vayne] auayne T, H, L.

247. deuoute] heartely T, L. 248. Thogh] If T, L.

250. mantel L. 251. your ryng] passing T, H.

252. a-syde] on syde T, H. 253. must be] shalbe T.

254. Thogh] If T — borne] and borne H.

255. While that ye] Whiles that you T, L. 256. man] wyght H.

The Abbesse maketh aunswere.

**A** LAS that Death hath thus for me ordeined,  
 That in no wise I maye it nought declyne,  
 If it so be ful oft I am\* constreined,  
 Brest and throte my notes out to twyne, 260  
 My chekes round vernysshed\* for to shine,  
 Ungird ful oft to walken at the large, —  
 Thus cruel Death with al estates fine,  
 Who hath no shippe must\* rowe in bote or barge. 264

Death speaketh to the Bayly.

**C**OME forth, Sir Bayly, that knowen all the guise,  
 By your office of trouth & rightwisnes,  
 Ye must come to a newe assyse,  
 Extorcions and wronges to redresse; 268  
 Ye be somned, as lawe biddeth expresse,  
 To yeue accomptes the\* Iudge wil you charge,  
 Which hath ordeined to excluden al falsnes,  
 That euery man shal beare his own[e] charge. 272

The Bayly maketh aunswere.

**O** THOU Lord God this is a hard iourney,  
 To which aforne I toke but litle hede;  
 My chaunce is turned, & that forthinketh me,  
 Whilom with iudges what me list to spede 276  
 Lay in my might, by labour oft for mede.  
 But sith there is no rescus by battayle,  
 I hold him wise that couth wel seen in dede,  
 Again[es] Death that none apel may vayle. 280

Death speaketh to the Astronomer.

**C**OME forth, Maister, that lookest vp so farre,  
 With instrumentes of Astronomie  
 To take the grees and hyght of euery starre;  
 What may auaille all your astrologie? — 284  
 Sith of Adam all the genealogie,  
 Made first of God to walke vpon the ground,  
 Death aresteth;\* thus sayth theologic:  
 And all shall dye for an apple rounde. 288

The Astronomer maketh aunswere.

**F**OR all my craft, cunnyng and\* science,  
 I can nought find[e] no prouision,  
 Ne\* in the starres seke\* no difference  
 By domifying nor calculacion, 292

257. thus for me] for me so L.  
 258. it nought declyne] nat hym eschewe L.  
 259. am] haue T, L. 261. vernysshed] garnished T, L.  
 262. Vngirt H. 264. must] he must T, L.  
 268. Extorcious H. 270. the] that T, L. 274. To] To the H.  
 277. by] for H. 278. sith] sethyn H — by] ne H.  
 279. couth wel seen] cowde see H.  
 285. of] that of H.  
 287. aresteth] with arest T, L. 289. and] or T, L.  
 291. Ne] Nother T, L — seke] search out T, L.  
 292. domifying] demonstryng H — nor] ne H.

Saue finally, in conclusion,  
 For to descriue our cunning euery dele:  
 There is no more by sentence of reason,  
 Who liueth aryght mot nedes dye well.

296

**Death speaketh to the Burgis.**

**S**YR Burgis, what doe ye lenger\* tarye?  
 For all your auoyre and youre great riches,  
 Thoghe\* ye be strong, deinous and contrary,  
 Toward this daunce ye mot you nedes dresse;  
 For your\* treasure, plentie and largesse,  
 From other it came and shall vnto strangers.  
 He is a foole that in such busines,  
 Wot nought for whom he stuffeth his garners!

300

304

**The Burgis maketh aunswere.**

**C**ERTES to me it is great displeasance,  
 To leaue al this & mai it nought assure:  
 Howses,\* rentes, treasure & substaunce, —  
 Death al fordoth, suche is his nature.  
 Therfore wise is no creature,  
 That set his heart on good that moste\* disseuer;  
 The world it lent, the worlde wil it recure;  
 And who most hath, lothest dyeth euer.

308

312

**Death speaketh to the Chanon Seculer.**

**A**ND ye, Syr Chanon, with many great prebende,  
 Ye may no lenger haue distribucion  
 Of golde [and] siluer, largelye to dispende;  
 For there is nowe no consolacion  
 But daunce with vs, for al your high renoun.  
 For ye of death[e] stonde\* vpon the brinke,  
 Ye may therof haue no delacion;  
 Death commeth ay when men least on him thinke.

316

320

**The Chanon maketh aunswere.**

**M**Y benefice with many personage,  
 God wot ful lite may me now comfort.  
 Death hath of me so great auantage,  
 That al my riches may me nought disport, —  
 Amisse of gris, they wyl ayein resorte,  
 Vnto the world a surples and prebende.  
 Al is vainglory, truly to reporte,  
 To dyen well eche man should entende.

324

328

297. lenger] long T, L. 298. auoyre] haueur H.

299. Thoghe] Yf T, L.

300. Toward] To H — mot you] muste now H.

301. your] of al T, L. 307. Howses] How these T, L.

308. fordoth] destroieth H.

310. on] of H — moste] may T, L. 311. 1st it] is H.

318. For ye of death stonde] For if death stode T, R.

320. ay] euer H.

321. benefice] benefices H. 322. lytell H. 323. of] ouer H.

324. That] om. H — me nought disport] be me not support H.

325. Amys H.

Death speaketh to the Marchaunte.

**Y**E rich Marchant, ye mot looke hitherwarde,  
 That passed haue ful many diuers lond  
 On horse, on foote, hauing most regard  
 To lucre & winnyng, as I vnderstond. 332  
 But now to daunce ye mot geue me your hond;  
 For al your labour ful litle auayleth now.  
 Aduē vaynglory, both of free and bonde,  
 None more coueit then thei that haue ynow. 336

The Marchaunt maketh aunswere.

**B**I many an hyll and many a strong[e] vale  
 I haue trauailed with many marchandise;  
 ouer the sea downe cary many a bale  
 To sondrye Iles, more than I can deuyse, 340  
 Mine heart inward ay fret\* with couetise,  
 But al for nought, now Deth me doth\* constrein:  
 For which I se, by record of the wyse,  
 Who al embraceth litle shall restrayne.\* 344

Death speaketh to the Chartreux.

**Y**EUE me your honde, with chekes dead and pale,  
 Caused of watche & long abstinence,  
 Sir Chart[e]reux, and your self auale  
 Vnto this daunce with humble pacience. 348  
 To striue ayein may be no resistance,  
 Lenger to liue set nought your memorye;  
 Thogh\* I be lothsome as in apparence,  
 Aboue[n] al men Death [hath] the victorie. 352

The Chartreux maketh aunswere.

**V**NTO this\* world I was dead long agon  
 By mine order and my profession;  
 And eueryman, be he neuer so strong,  
 Dreadeth to dye by kindly mocion 356  
 After his fleshly inclinacion.  
 But please to God my soule [for] to borowe  
 Fro Fiendes myght and fro damnacion:  
 Some arne to-day that shal nought be to-morow. 360

Death speaketh to the Sargeaunte.

**C**OME forth Sir Sargeaunt, with your stately mase,  
 Make no defence nor rebellion,  
 Nought may\* auale to grutchen in this case,  
 Thogh\* ye be deyners of condicion: 364

339. downe] do H.  
 341. fret] fretteth T. 342. me doth T. 343. For] By H.  
 344. restrayne] constrein T.  
 351. Thogh] If T — as] om. H. 353. this] the T.  
 355. And] Thoghe H. 358. to] it to H. 359. 2nd fro] om. H.  
 362. nor] ne no H. 363. Nought may] It may nought T.  
 364. Thogh] If T — deynous H.

For neyther [ap]pele nor proteccion  
 May you fraunchise to doe nature wrong;  
 For there is none so sturdy chaumpion,  
 Thogh\* he be mightie, another is also strong. 368

**The Sargeaunt maketh aunswere.**

**H**OWE durste thou\* Death set on me arest,  
 That am the kynges chosen officer,  
 Which yesterday, both[en] east and west,  
 Mine office dyd, ful surquedous of chere; 372  
 But now this day I am arested here,  
 And can nought flee, thoh\* I had it sworne.  
 Eche\* man is loth to die, both farre & nere,  
 That hath nought learned for to dye\* aforne. 376

**Death speaketh to the Monke.**

**S**YR Monke, also with your blacke habite,  
 Ye may no lenger hold[e] here soioure;  
 There is nothyng that may you here respite  
 Agein my might you for to doe succour; 380  
 Ye mot accompt[e] touchyng your labour,  
 How ye haue spend it, in dede, word & thought.  
 To earth and ashes turneth euery floure;  
 The life of man is but a thyng of nought. 384

**The Monke maketh aunswere.**

**I**HAD leauer in the cloyster be,  
 At my booke and study my seruice,  
 Which is a place contemplatife to see;  
 But I haue spent my life in mony wyse, 388  
 Like as a foole dissolute and nice.  
 God of his mercy graunt me repentaunce.  
 By chere outward hard is to deuise,  
 Al be not merye which that men seen daunce. 392

**Death speaketh to the Usurer.**

**T**HOU Vsurer, looke vp and beholde,  
 Unto wynnng that settest al\* thy payne,  
 Whose couetise waxeth neuer colde,  
 Thy gredy thrust so sore the doth constraine. 396  
 But thou shalt neuer to thy desyre attayne,  
 Suche an etike thyne heart[e] freten shall,  
 But that of pitie God his honde refraine,  
 One perilous stroke shal make thee losen al. 400

367. a champyoun H.

368. Thogh] If T — another is] Deth is H.

369. durste thou] dare this T.

374. can] may H — thogh] if T. 375. Eche] Euery T, H.

376. dye] be ded T. 379.] Per may no thinge her you  
 respite H. 380. for] om. H. 381. muste H.

382. spend it in dede word] spendid worde dede H.

385. the] my H — be] to be H. 391. is] om. H.

392. not] no H.

394. wynnng that settest al] thy wynnng thou settest aye T.

397. to] om. H. 399. But that] That but H.

400. loosen] lese H.



## The Usurer maketh aunswere.

**N**OW [me] behoueth sodeinly to dye,  
 Which is to me great paine & eke greuance.  
 Succour to fynde I see no maner way  
 Of golde nor siluer by none cheuisance; 404  
 Death through his hast abideth no purueiance  
 Of folkes blynde that can nought loke wel:  
 Full oft happeth by kynde of fatall chaunce,  
 Some haue fayre eyen that seen neuer adel. 408

## The Poore Man boroweth of the Usurer.

**V**SURER to God is full great offence,  
 And in his syght a great abusion;  
 The poore boroweth percase for indigence,  
 The riche lent by false collusion, 412  
 Onely for lucre in his entencion.  
 Death shal both[e] to accomptes fette,  
 To make reconing by computacion:  
 No man is quit that is behynd of dette. 416

## Death speaketh to the Phisicien.

**M**AISTER of Phisike, which on your vryne  
 So looke and gase and stare agaynst the sunne,  
 For al your craft and study of medicine,  
 [And] all the practike and science that ye cunne, 420  
 Your lyues\* course so farre forth is yrunne,  
 Ayein my might your craft may not endure,  
 For al the gold that ye thereby\* haue vunne:  
 Good leche is he that can himself\* recure. 424

## The Phisicien maketh aunswer.

**F**ULL long agon that I vnto Phisike  
 Set my wit and eke my diligence,  
 In speculatif and also in practike,\*  
 To geat a name through mine excellence, 428  
 To fynd out agaynes\* pestilence  
 Preseruatifes to staunche it and to fine:  
 But I dare [say] shortly in sentence,  
 Againes\* Death is worth no medicine. 432

## Death speaketh to the Amerous Squire.

**Y**E that be gentle, so fresh & amerous,  
 Of yeres yong flouring in your gene age,  
 Lusty [and] fre, of hert eke\* desirous,  
 Ful of deuises & change in your courage, 436

402. eke] om. H.

406. loke] se H. 407. chaunce] change H.

409. *This stanza is omitted in H.*

416. No is repeated in T.

417. on] in H. 421. lyues] life T.

423. ye thereby] thereby ye T — haue] hath H.

424. can himself] himself can T. 426. eke] om. H.

427. practike] practife T.

429. agaynes] agaynst T.

432. Againes] Say that against T.

435. eke] & eke T, and (*the rest erased*) H.

Pleasaunt of port, of loke and of visage:  
 But al shal turne into ashes dead;  
 For al beautie is but a faynt ymage,  
 Which stealeth away or folkes can take hede. 440

**The Squyer maketh aunswer.**

**A**LAS, alas, I can nowe no succour  
 Agaynes\* Death[e] for myselfe prouide!  
 A-due of youth the lusty fresh[e] flower,  
 A-due vainglory of beautie and of pride,\* 444  
 A-due all service of the god Cupide,  
 A-due my Ladies, so fresh so wel beseyn:  
 For agayn[s] Death nothyng may abyde,  
 And windes great gon down with litle rein. 448

**Death speaketh to the Gentlewoman.**

**C**OME forth Maistresse, of yeres yonge and grene,  
 Which hold your selfe of beautie souereyn,  
 As fayre as ye was whilom Pollixene,  
 Penelope and the quene Helein. 452  
 Yet on this daunce thei went[e] both[e] tweyne,  
 And so shall ye, for al your straungenesse;  
 Thogh\* daunger long in loue hath lad your rein,  
 Arested is your change of doublenes. 456

**The Gentlewoman maketh aunswer.**

**O**CRUEL Death, that spareth none estate,  
 To old and yong thou art indifferent;  
 To my beautie thou hast said checkmate,  
 So hasty is thy mortail iudgement. 460  
 For in my youth[e] this was mine entent,  
 To my service many man to haue lured;  
 But she is a foole, shortly in sent[e]ment,  
 That in her beautie is to mucche assured. 464

**Death speaketh to the Man of Law.**

**S**YR Aduocate, short proces for to make,  
 Ye mot come plete afore the\* high[e] iudge.  
 Many a quarel\* ye haue vndertake  
 And for lucre done to folke refuge; 468  
 But my fraunchise is so large and huge  
 That counsaile none auaille may but trowth:  
 He scapeth wisely of death the great deluge,  
 Tofore the dome who is nought teint with slouth. 472

**The Man of Law maketh aunswer.**

**O**F right & reason by Natures law,  
 I can nought putte against Deth no defence,  
 Ne by my\* sleight me kepen or withdraw,  
 For al my wit and al\* my gret prudence,\* 476

439. al] al your H.

442. Against T. 444. of pride] the prouide T.

455. Thogh] Yf T — hath] haue H. 462. lured] alleurede H.

462. sentement] sentence H. 466. the] that H.

467. a quarel] quarels T. 468. done to] to do H.

474. nought] om. H — putte] putten T. 475 is transposed

after 477 T. 475. Ne by my] Nother by no T — or] ne H.

476. and al] and H, for al T.

To [make] appeale from his dredful sentence;  
 Nor nothyng in earth may a man preserue,  
 Agayn his might to make resistence:  
 God quiteth all men like as they deserue. 480

Death speaketh to Maister John Rikil Tregetour.

**M**ASTER John Rikil, whilom Tregetour  
 Of noble Henry king of Eng[e]lond,  
 And of Fraunce the mightie conquerour, —  
 For al the sleightes and turning of thine hond, 484  
 Thou must come nere my daunce to vnderstand.  
 Nought may auayle al thy conclusions;  
 For Death, shortly, nother on sea ne lond,  
 Is not deceiued by none illusions. 488

The Tregetour maketh aunswer.

**W**HAT may auayle magike naturall  
 Or any craft shewed by apparence,  
 Or course of starres aboue celestiall,  
 Or of the heauens al the influence 492  
 Ageynes\* Death to stonde at defence?  
 Legerdmain now helpeth me right nought.  
 Fare wel my craft and [al] such sapience;  
 For Death hath mo maistries than I haue wrought.\* 496

Death speaketh to the Person.

**O**SIR Curate, that been now here present,  
 That had your worldly inclinacion,  
 Your heart entere, your study & entent,  
 Most of your tithes and\* oblacion, 500  
 Which should haue be of conuersacion  
 Mirrour to other, light and examplarie, —  
 Like your desert[e] shalbe your guerdon,  
 And to eche\* labour due is the salarye. 504

The Person maketh aunswere.

**M**AUGER my wil I must[e] condescende;  
 For death assaileth euery liuely thing  
 Here in this world[e], who can comprehend  
 His sodein stroke and his vnware commyng.\* 508  
 Fare wel [my] tithes, and fare wel mine offering, —  
 I mot go coumpten in\* order by and by,  
 And for my shepe make a iust reckonyng:  
 Whom he acquiteth\* I hold he is happye. 512

479. make] make no H.

481. *This stanza is transposed in H, following the Minstral.*

485. my] this H. 487. ne] and H.

492. the heauens] heuen H. 493. Ageynes] Against T.

496.] For Death mo maistries hath ywrought T — wrought]  
 wronge H. 500. and] and your T. 504. eche] euery T.

508. commyng] turnyng T.

510. in] by T.

512. Whom he acquiteth] & who that so him quiteth T.

## Death speaketh to the Iurrouer.

**M**AISTER Iurrouer, which that at assises  
 And at sheres questes dydst embrace,  
 Departist\* lond like to thy deuises,  
 And who most gaue most stode in thy grace: 516  
 The poore man lost both[e] land and place;  
 For golde thou couldest folke disherite.  
 But now let se, with thy teynt[e] face  
 Tofore the Iudge how [thou] canst thee quite! 520

## The Iurrouer maketh aunswere.

**W**HILOM I was cleped in my countrey  
 The belweather, and that was not alite.  
 Nought loued but drad of high & low degree;  
 For whom me list by craft, I could endite, — 524  
 Hongen the true and the thefe respite:  
 Al the countrey by my worde was lad.  
 But I dare sein, shortly for to write,  
 Of my death many a man is glad. 528

## Death speaketh to the Minstral.

**O** THOU Minstrall, that can so note and pipe  
 Unto folke[s] for to done pleasaunce,  
 By thi\* ryght honde anone I shall the gripe,  
 With these other to gone vpon my daunce; 532  
 There is no scape nother auoydaunce,  
 On no syde to contraire\* my sentence:  
 For in musike by craft and accordaunce  
 Who maister is [shal] shewen his science.\* 536

## The Minstrall maketh aunswere.

**T**HIS new[e] daunce is to me so straunge,  
 Wonder diuers and passingly contrarye;  
 The dredefull footyng doth so oft[e] chaunge  
 And the mesures so oft[e] tymes\* varye, 540  
 Which now to me is nothyng\* necessarye.  
 If it wer so that I might asterte!  
 But many a man, if I shal nought tary,  
 Oft [tyme] daunseth, but nothyng of hert. 544

## Death speaketh to the Labourer.

**T**HOU Labourer, which in sorowe and peyn  
 Hast lad thy life in [ful] great trauayle,  
 Ye must eke daunce and therfore nought disdein;  
 For if thou do, it may the nought auayle. 548  
 And cause why that I thee assayle  
 Is onely this: from thee to disceuer  
 The false world that can so folkes fayle;  
 He is a foole that weneth to liuen euer. 552

513. at] is at H.

515. Departest] Deper didst T — deuises] devise H.

529. can] canst H. 531. thi] the T.

534. contraire] contune T. 536. science] sentence T.

540. tymes] sith T. 541. now to me is] vnto me is now T.

545. Thou] O thou H. 548. if] thoghe H.

552. liuen] liue H.

The Labourer maketh aunswere.

I HAUE wished after Death ful oft,  
 Albe that I would haue fled him nowe.  
 I had leauer to haue lyen vnsoft,  
 In wind & rain to haue gon at the plowe, 556  
 With spade & pikoys labored for my prowē,  
 Doluen and ditched and at the cart[e] gone:  
 For I may say and tell[e] platlye howe,  
 In this worlde there is rest[e] none. 560

Death speaketh to the Frere Menour.

SYR Cordelere, to you mine hande is raught,  
 To\* this daunce [you] to conuay & leade,  
 Which in your preaching han ful oft ytaught  
 How that I am most gastful for to drede, 564  
 Albe that folke take thereto none hede.  
 Yet is there none so strong ne so hardye,  
 But Death dare hym rest and let for no mede;  
 For Death yche\* houre is present and ready. 568

The Frere maketh aunswere.

WHAT may this be, that in this world no man  
 Here to abide may haue no suretie?  
 Strength, riches, nor what so that he can  
 Of worldly wisdom; all is but vanitie! 572  
 In great estate nor in pouertie  
 Is nothing founde that may from\* death defend;  
 For which I saye to high and low degree,  
 Wise is the\* sinner that doth his lyfe amend. 576

Death speaketh to the Chylde.

LITTLE Faunte, that were but late borne,  
 Shape in this worlde to haue no pleasaunce,  
 Ye must with other, that gone here beforne,  
 Be lad in hast by fatall ordinaunce. 580  
 Learne ouer\* new to gone [up]on my daunce:  
 There may none age escape in soth therefro.  
 Let euery wight haue this in remembraunce,  
 Who lengest liueth most shal suffer woe. 584

The Yong Childe maketh aunswer.

A A a, a woorde I cannot speake;  
 I am so yonge; I was borne yesterday.  
 Death is so hasty on me to be wreake,  
 And list no lenger to make no delaie. 588  
 I come but now,\* and now I go my way;  
 Of me no more tale\* shall [ye] be told.  
 The wyll of God no man withstonde maye;  
 As soone dyeth a yong [man] as an olde. 592

555. haue] haue had H. 557. labored] haue labored H.

558. ditched] dyke H. 560. there] here there H.

562. To] You to H. 563. oft taught H.

567. dare hym rest] dar arest him H. 568. yche] euery T.

574. from] his T. 576. the] that T. 577. Enfante H.

579. Ye] thou H. 581. ouer] of T. 585. A a a] A A a H.

589. I come but now] I am but now borne T.

590. tale] to tale T.

**Death speaketh to the Yong Clerke.**

**O** YE, Syr Clerke, suppose ye to be free  
 Fro my daunce or your selfe defende,  
 That wend haue risen vnto high degree  
 Of benefice or some great prebende? 596  
 Who climbeth highest sometime shal descend.  
 Let no man grutche ayeines\* his fortune,  
 But take at gree what-euer God him sende,  
 Which punisheth al when time is oportune. 600

**The Clerke maketh aunswere.**

**S**HALL [I] that am so yong a clerke now die,  
 Fro\* my seruice & haue no bet guerdon?  
 Is there no gayn[e] ne no better way,  
 No seurer\* fraunchise nor proteccion? 604  
 Death maketh alway a short conclusion;  
 To late ware, when men been on the brynke:  
 The world shall fayle and all possession;  
 For much faileth of thing that foles\* thinke. 608

**Death speaketh to the Hermite.**

**Y**E that haue liued long in wildernes  
 And there continued long in abstinence,  
 At the last[e] yet ye mot you dresse,  
 Of my daunce to haue experience; 612  
 For there against may be\* no resistance.  
 Take now leaue of thyne hermitage:  
 W[h]erfore yche\* man aduert to this sentence,  
 That [in] this life is\* no sure heritage. 616

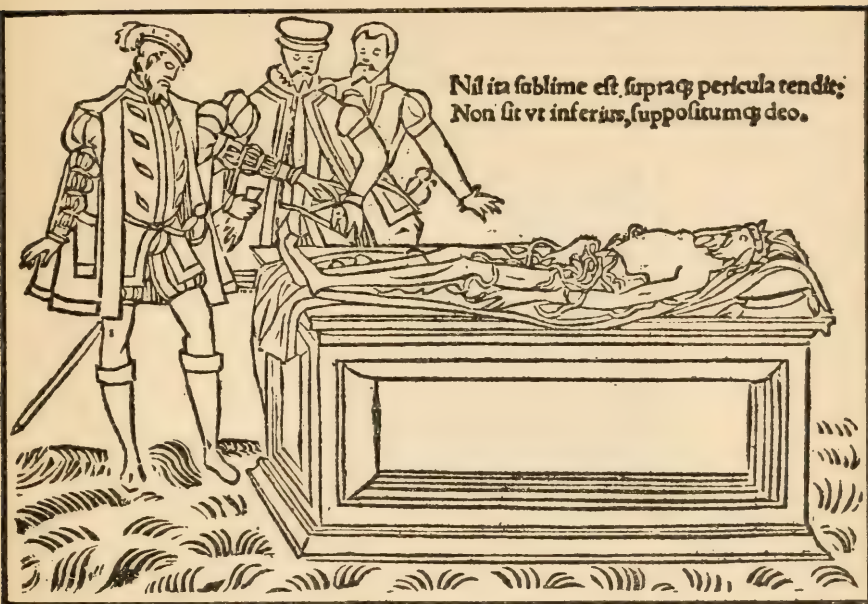
**The Hermite maketh aunswere.**

**T**O liue in desert called solitarie  
 May again Death haue respite none nor space;  
 At vnset houre his comyng doth not tary,  
 And for my part welcom by Goddes grace, 620  
 Thankyng hym with humble chere & face  
 Of al his giftes and great haboundaunce,  
 Finally affirmyng in this place,  
 No man is riche that lacketh suffraunce. 624

**Death speaketh agayn to the Hermite.**

**T**HAT is wel sayd, and thus should euery wight  
 Thanken his God & al his wittes dresse  
 To loue & dread him *witb* all his heart & might,  
 Sith Death to escape maye be no sikernes. 628  
 As men deserue, God quiteth of rightwisnes  
 To riche and poore vpon euery syde:  
 A better lesson there can no clerke expresse,  
 Than til to-morow is no man sure to abide. 632

597. highest] hie H. 598. ayeines] ayeinst T.  
 599. in gree H. 602. Fro] Of T — bet] better T.  
 604. seurer] better T — nor] ne H. 608. foles] folkes T.  
 613. may be] is T. 615. yche] euery T — to] *om.* H.  
 616. is] here is T. 617. To liue] Lyff H.  
 619. hour] stewyne H. 624. suffraunce] suffisaunce T.  
 629. quiteth] quite H. 630. To] The H.



## ¶ The King liggig eaten of Wormes.

**Y**E folke that loke vpon this portrature,  
Beholding here all estates daunce,  
Seeth what ye been & what is your nature:  
Meat vnto wormes; nought els in substaunce. 636  
And haueth this mirroure aye in remembraunce,  
Howe I lye here whylom crowned [a] kyng,  
To al estates a true resemblaunce,  
That wormes foode is\* fine of our\* liuyng. 640

## ¶ Machabree the Doctoure.

**M**ANS lyfe\* is nought els, platly for to thinke,  
But as [a] wind[e] which is transitory,  
Passing ay forth, whether he wake or winke, 644  
Toward this daunce, haueth this in memorye,  
Remembryng aye there is no better victory  
In this life here than fle syn at the least;  
Than shal ye reygne in paradise with glorie.  
Happy is he that maketh in heauen his feast! 648

Yet been there folkemo than sixe or seuen,  
Recheles of life in many maner wyse,  
Like as there were hell[e] none nor heauen.  
Such false errour let every man despise; 652

633. folkene H.

634. Beholdithe H. 637. haue H — aye] euer H.

640. is] is the T — our] your T.

641. Mans lyfe] Man is T, Man is life H — els] om. H.

648. in heuen that maketh H. 652. errors H.

*The Daunce of Machabree*

For holy saynctes and olde clerkes wyse  
 Written contrary, her falsenes to deface:\*  
 To liuen wel, take\* for the best emprise,  
 Is much[e] worth when men shall\* hence passe. 656

¶ *Lenuoye of the Translatoure.*

**O** YE my lordes & maisters all in fere,\*  
 Of auenture that shal this daunce reade,  
 Lowely I pray with all myne heart entere  
 To correct[e] where-as ye se nede; 660  
 For nought elles I aske for my mede  
 But goodly support of this translacion,  
 And with fauour to suppowaille drede,  
 Bening[e]lye in your correccioun. 664

Out of the French I drough it of entent,  
 Not word by word but folowing in substaunce,  
 And from Paris to Eng[e]land it sent,  
 Only of purpose you to do plesaunce. 668  
 Rude of langage, I was not borne in France, —  
 Haue me excused, my name is Iohn Lidgate,\*  
 Of ther tong I haue no suffisance,  
 Her curious miters in Englishe to translate. 672

¶ *Here endeth the Daunce of Machabree.*

654. deface] defame T.  
 655. lyue H — take] take thys T.  
 656. shall] should T.  
 657. my lordes & maisters] maistres and folkes H — fere]  
 feare T.  
 667 and 668 are transposed in T.  
 669 and 670 are transposed in T. 669. ther] other T.















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